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THE NATION

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THE WESTERN HERO: Robert Alan Aurthur

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LETTERS

Total power

Marblehead, Mass.

Dear Sirs: Lawrence J. Hollander's article on power companies and engineers ["The Big Blackout: Whooping Cranes & Power Failures," *The Nation*, Jan. 10] is controversial to a high degree and should stir up a storm, if any power company executives (and engineers) read it. . . .

He is writing of two different subjects. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 have a lot of truth in them, judging from what I have read. To teen-agers in general, power engineering has no glamour—it's the drudge, the Cinderella of the profession, while electronics and nuclear physics are the keys to the "brave new world." Paragraph 12: There is a vital difference between "efficient" and "economical"; something many (but not all) professors do not realize. The biggest, but not the only, difference is the *annual* cost of capital investment.

Beginning with paragraph 15, the author starts a new subject, "Total Energy" power and heating plant. From here on he goes completely "off the beam" in the sense that he depicts the wonderful advantages of the small combination power and heat generator, but never a word about the disadvantages, of which there are two whopping big ones and many others. . . .

Mr. Hollander talks as if "Total Energy" were his baby, whereas there have been hundreds of them for years. About forty-five years ago I spent a week with a slide rule and a sharp pencil on this subject, and the total annual cost came out about the same for a combined plant or separate power and heat stations.

James J. Storrow

New York City

Dear Sirs: Mr. Storrow's characterization of power engineering as the "drudge, the Cinderella of the profession" sums up exactly the thoughts of virtually all students. That is why the field as a learned profession in this country is disappearing rapidly.

The second part of his comments concerning "Total Energy" represents the opinion expressed by engineers who knew power from the days of the early on-site power plants. Such plants are obsolete, they are inefficient, they are not economical, they are unreliable, and they have no place in today's electrified cities. The whole point in this part of my article is that the steam-electric power cycle represents a waste of this country's natural resources.

Forty-five years ago when Mr. Storrow "spent a week with a slide rule and a sharp pencil on this subject," his conclusions were right: they are still right today. I have not proposed the use of any such private plant using the steam cycle or other methods in which the overall efficiency cannot reach even 40 per cent. . . .

In today's literature "Total Energy" is a new concept, using new equipment which, for all practical purposes, was not available even ten years ago; it is based on fuels such as natural gas, which when used with this new equipment makes the whole thing possible economically. It leads to thermal efficiencies of 85 per cent, a figure unheard of in years gone by, a figure that is incomprehensible to power engineers of the past who still consider efficiencies in the order of 40 per cent utopian. . . .

It is difficult to believe that aware people have not noted this changing technology. Total Energy plants are being built today; they are efficient and they are "making" money for their owners. More will be built tomorrow.

Lawrence J. Hollander

Instead of movies

New York City

Dear Sirs: It is perfectly practicable to equip our giant jets with drogue parachutes or even arresting hooks (as FAA tests have shown) for aid in emergency braking. [See "Air Safety: The Lethal Lapses," by Karl Ruppenthal, *The Nation*, Dec. 27.]

Disasters of the type which claimed the lives of 100 Atlantans at Paris could then possibly be avoided. The weight of equipment and structure for a drogue 'chute system could be exchanged for the passenger entertainment system without loss of payload!

Howard P. Dinesman

Mexican uproar

Metairie, La.

Dear Sirs: You will be interested to know that on Nov. 9, Don Arnaldo Orfila Reynal was fired from his position as director of the Mexican publishing house, Fondo de Cultura. The rumors are that his decision to publish the Spanish edition of *The Children of Sánchez* led to his dismissal by the Mexican Government. [See "Silencing The Children of Sánchez" by Joseph Sommers, *The Nation*, Dec. 27.]

Orfila Reynal has been replaced by Salvador Azuela, considered a reactionary in some Mexican circles. The independent intellectuals, however, have not taken Orfila Reynal's dismissal sitting down. There are already concrete plans to launch—under his direction—a new publishing house,

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The Message

The President's third State of the Union message surprised by not surprising. It was one of his typical "all this and heaven too" performances, with something in it for everyone—and no increase in taxes. Even members of the House were promised a dividend for past and future good behavior: the four-year term, a suggestion which naturally drew the longest and loudest applause. But on the one great issue, Vietnam, about all that can be said for the message was that it was mild-sounding and nonbelligerent. On other counts it was a wretched performance. The President himself probably found it difficult to mouth those unctuous, misleading phrases about "freedom" and "self-determination" and our deathless commitment thereto. Why is it that American spokesmen find it so difficult to say that we are in Vietnam to protect what we seem to regard as a vital national interest: the containment and, if necessary, the destruction of Red China? Patently we are not dedicated to the "freedom" or "self-determination" of nations except where it serves specific American interests, usually economic. We trade with the Union of South Africa, a defiant symbol of non-freedom and non-self-determination; indeed, it is a favored field for American investment. The oldest and one of the meanest dictatorships—Salazar's Portugal—we tolerate, make deals with and generally support. We have made a pet of Franco; Dean Rusk would not think of visiting Europe without paying his respects to the Caudillo, in whose regime we have a vast military investment. The list could be extended. As a matter of intellectual and moral self-respect, would it not be possible to drop the pious cant about "freedom" and "self-determination" and say what we really mean?

As to Vietnam, the President once again repeated the fiction of the two nations, one north, one south. The north had aggressively invaded the south and the south was now fighting for its "independence." Not long before the President spoke, Jack Perkins narrated a TV news sequence (N.B.C.) from Vietnam that made a mockery of every phrase the President used about that unhappy land. Our forces had set a carefully prepared trap for the Vietcong only to discover, in the familiar pattern, that the VCs were not around. U.S. troops were then shown firing "nonlethal" gases into tunnel entrances out of which soon emerged not North Vietnamese troops or VCs but refugees, mostly old men and women, mothers with infants in their arms, wailing, terrified, crying, a scene almost too frightful to view. Women were shown being carried off screaming and kicking to waiting helicopters because, of course, we had to remove "civilians," about 400 in number, before B-52 bombers flattened the entire area, villages and all. As Perkins laconically observed, the villagers "for some reason didn't want to leave." Were they, perhaps, trying to exercise the right of self-determination, there in the jungles near the Saigon River? Today we are carrying out a scorched-earth policy in Vietnam and we continue to bomb—in the south and in Laos. The President's pious recitation about Vietnam was more than revolting: it was alarming. Self-deception can be as dangerous for nations as for individuals. It is disturbing when a President, not noted for his candor, resorts to the kind of Orwellian Newspeak about Vietnam that characterized this message. Politically the message may have been brilliant; morally and intellectually it was a disaster.

Kuss of Death

Henry J. Kuss, Jr., has a mouth-filling title: Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Logistics Negotiations. In fewer words, he is America's chief arms salesman. During 1965, four editorials in *The Nation* dealt with Mr. Kuss's activities, or related aspects of the regional arms races promoted and financed by the United States and intertwined with its far-flung military, diplomatic and intelligence-gathering operations. Several recent newspaper stories further attest to Mr. Kuss's importance. The most comprehensive is by Robert R. Brunn in the January 3 *Christian Science Monitor*. It belies the comfortable notion that, in the words of Mr. Johnson, this nation would "choose peace, and with it the wondrous works of peace."

A corps of Kuss salesmen range over the six continents, representing U.S. arms manufacturers but dealing government to government. Profits for the manufacturers run to about 10 per cent, and labor benefits proportionately. In the past four years, according to Mr. Kuss, arms orders overseas have "brought over 1,200,000 man-years of employment, spread through all fifty states and the District of Columbia."

The volume of sales is about $2 billion annually and is expected to hold at that level, or better, for the next ten years. Numerous benefits, as viewed from the Departments of Defense and State, flow from this traffic. Our adverse balance of payments, with its outward gold flow of about $1.5 billion annually, is largely the result of U.S. "defense" expenditures abroad; what could be more appropriate, then, than that cash receipts from the sale of arms to foreigners should offset 40 per cent of this drain? They cover no higher percentage because Uncle Sam does not insist on cash: arms are more often sold on easy credit. In addition to major sales to our NATO partners, we are now supplying twenty-four countries, fifteen of which are in the underdeveloped category. The people of these nations may go hungry, but their army commanders and ruling groups appreciate our generosity. We make contacts which often prove valuable. Ex-

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amples are Gen. Abdul Haris Nasution in Indonesia and Gen. Joseph Mobutu in the Congo, who have given short shrift to Communists in their countries.

Although the Kuss emissaries are temperamentally inclined toward the hard sell, they are models of discretion when U.S. interests seem to require it. Or at least they try. Consider the arms race in the Middle East, where the Arab countries hate one another only less than they hate the Israelis. President Nasser in Egypt has supersonic fighters, so King Faisal of Saudi Arabia had to have them. He flashed his credit card and got $400 million worth of airplanes provided by the British, and Hawk antiaircraft missiles of American make. Then there is the current deal involving 100 Patton tanks for King Hussein of Jordan. This had to be a hush-hush affair, because in 1965 we secretly supplied a quantity of the same tanks to Israel, via West Germany. The secrecy did not last long in either deal. In the case of Jordan, it fell open when the State Department's U.S. Information Agency ran an article in a regional magazine for Arab readers boasting that Uncle Sam, ever the friend of Islam, was supplying tanks that would give the Jordanian army "greater mobility and fire power." The Israeli Ambassador made a point of calling on Secretary Rusk, and Mrs. Golda Meier was soon assuring the Knesset that the Israeli army would be getting additional tanks from somewhere to meet the Arab threat.

One also remembers the Pakistan-India war, fought with U.S. equipment on both sides, though both had pledged to use it only against the Communists. But these little difficulties do not faze Mr. Kuss in the slightest. He is not only offering still newer and better weapons but training "a new breed of engineer-diplomats" to distribute them, all in the interest of peace. Drew Pearson reports that a delegation of U.S. Senators touring Asia reached the different conclusion that "U.S. arms supplied to once-neutral nations are breeding war." Now that Congress is in session again, would not this sort of thing be a valid topic for debate in the Senate?

The Quick and the Dead

Lal Bahadur Shastri died much like Abraham Lincoln, at the height of his popularity and when a longer life, by all indications, would not have given him greater historical stature. He was a remarkable human being and an even more remarkable politician—one who had mastered the art of compromise and was seemingly unable to make enemies. Death struck him down only a few hours after the accomplishment of an act of rare statesmanship, in which he rose above the pressures of domestic politics and achieved a measure of reconciliation with a nation only recently at war with his own. The best tribute that could be paid to him would be the lasting peace which he so ardently desired and which India so desperately needs.

In the January 9 London *Observer*, during the closing days of Shastri's life, Edward Crankshaw discussed the Soviet Union's new role as peacemaker in Asia and showed how ludicrous the simplistic view of history can be, especially when it is based on the principle that the more things change, the more they are the same. If there was one axiom in the 19th-century British view of international relations, it was that the Russians must never be allowed to approach the plains of India. Yet it was on Russian soil that Shastri of India and Ayub Khan of Pakistan were brought together, and the mediator was none other than Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin of the Soviet Union. Whitehall looked on approvingly, perhaps a little envious that it had not seized the opportunity itself, but glad that the fighting between the heirs to the subcontinent was over for the time being and, one may hope, for as far as man can see into the future. And beyond India, what any 19th-century British statesman would have regarded as an eternal enmity between Russia and Persia, Russia and Turkey, is simultaneously in process of dissolution. The czars, the minstrels of empire led by Rudyard Kipling, Benjamin Disraeli and Lord Curzon not only lacked the gift of prophecy; reality has turned out to be almost the complete opposite of what they foresaw.

If time confounded these would-be seers, they were at least spared humiliation while they still strutted on the world stage. America's statesmen have not even that consolation. The Soviet Union is involved in Southeast Asia only in the comfortable role of a supplier of arms and friend to small nations, while the United States is embroiled in a bloody, ignominious war which is dissipating all the credit it earned through occasional acts of magnanimity in the past. Both the Soviet Union and the United States fear the emergence of China as a major military and industrial power. But the Soviet Union, though engaged in ideological conflict with China, shows not the slightest intention of using its military strength against its erstwhile Marxist partner, while the United States has already gone so far along that perilous path that it may never be able to retrace its steps. If they can still learn from current history, Dean Rusk and his colleagues should ponder what has happened in Tashkent. It is not napalm and nuclear power that win diplomatic victories, but intelligence and patience—and the ability to profit by an opponent's folly.

Now the Germans

Dollars are sweet, and in the decades after World War II the United States had no buddies more cloying than Japan and Germany. But the friendship bombing of Vietnam, and the therapeutic burning of its villages, appear to be more than even our plump ex-enemies can take with equanimity. The opposition of Japanese artists, intellectuals and students has been evident for some months [see statement in *The Nation* June 14, 1965]; and now Germany adds its voice to the international chorus of protests.

The German critics of Uncle Sam, it must be admitted, have had some trouble making themselves heard; the Bonn establishment still finds its bread

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buttered on the State Department side. On November 26, all West German newspapers received a statement signed by some 200 writers and teachers, including (to cite names that will be most readily identified by American readers) Günther Anders, Ernst Bloch, Heinrich Böll, Rolf Hochhuth, Uwe Johnson, Robert Jungk, Erich Kastner and Peter Weiss. After declaring the struggle in Vietnam a civil war and deploring American participation as morally unjustified and threatening a much wider conflict, the signers dissociated themselves from any moral or financial support given the war by the German Federal Government, welcomed the call of France and the Third World countries for a settlement on the basis of the Geneva Agreement and joined hands with the "5,000 American university professors and teachers who have asked for an immediate halt to the war and the neutralization of all Vietnam."

No West German paper published this statement (though an appeal to warm-hearted Germans to buy replicas of Berlin's Freedom Bell, the proceeds to go to the families of Americans killed in Vietnam, was widely publicized). Then on December 15, *Der Spiegel*, a magazine whose independent line has consistently pricked the complacency of West German officialdom, broke the silence and printed the entire text. It followed this a week later with a report on the widespread suppression of the manifesto. A colorful detail in the official blackout was the offer of the West Berlin police to arrest a cabaret satirist named Neuss (he had referred to South Vietnam General Ky's hero worship of Hitler) for "insulting the Occupying Power." Said Power had at least the good sense to oppose this fawning nonsense. The imperfect suppression of the statement has thus become a scandal in West Germany and, as always happens with defective censorship, the affair is kicking up more attention than the protestors could otherwise have expected.

If, as now seems probable, the Johnson Administration is trying to negotiate its way off the escalator, one reason may be that the multilingual protest of humanity is at last being heard on the banks of the Pedernales.

Citizen Diplomacy

Clemenceau's saying that war is too important to be left to the generals can now be extended to the diplomats, especially when the chief U.S. diplomat is as uninspired and uninspiring as Dean Rusk. It may have been this fact of modern life that impelled Staughton Lynd, Thomas Hayden and Herbert Aptheker to tresspass on the sacred preserves of the State Department and journey to North Vietnam to see for themselves.

Nor is this the only venture of its kind; it is merely the most conspicuous and defiant. Last summer Sanford Gottlieb, political action director of SANE and organizer of the spectacular November "march" on Washington, conferred with leaders of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, and he is reported to be leaving shortly—if he has not already left—for a second exchange of views. The locale in this case is Algiers, which is not part of the State Department's proscribed territory; no Apthekers are involved, and SANE reports to the Department on the results. As a practical matter, however, it is hard to distinguish between the Lynd-Hayden-Aptheker reconnaissance and that of Gottlieb. Donald Keys, SANE's program director, says that the current mission will be "mainly to try to judge the temperature as to any openings for negotiations that we could discern, and help interpret the American viewpoint and attitude." These two objectives were certainly in the foreground of the Lynd expedition.

Lynd and his colleagues, reporting on their return that they had found nothing to indicate that the United States had made any direct approaches to North Vietnam, elicited from the White House and the State Department the information that shortly after Christmas Eve a message had been handed to a North Vietnamese diplomat by an American embassy official and had been accepted, but that no reply had so far been received. This enabled Bill Moyers to tell the press that the self-appointed emissaries were "totally uninformed," but it also enabled him to release information which makes the Washington "peace offensive" look better, and which could not very well have been revealed without some such excuse. In Hanoi, Lynd made a speech which called U.S. policy "inhuman, unlawful and anti-democratic"—a characterization with which some millions of Americans would agree —but he also made it clear that this was a minority view even among intellectuals that the U.S. labor, as represented by the AFL-CIO, strongly supported President Johnson's policy on Vietnam. Dispelling the ludicrous Marxist illusion that the working people of America are eager to cast off their chains and make common cause with their comrades abroad was alone worth the trip and should be regarded as a service both to the United States and to the cause of peace.

For these accomplishments, Lynd, Aptheker and Hayden may be indicted for two synthetic crimes: violation of the 1799 Logan Act, a statute as antiquated as a colonial butter churn; or the more modern prohibition against travel without a validated passport. Referring to the idiotic statute, the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, one of the best newspapers in this hemisphere, headed an editorial: "They were right to go, will they be welcome home?" "Persecution of Prof. Lynd by the U.S. Government," the paper says, "would only convince many of its critics that for all its pious declarations, Washington has no real desire to negotiate."

In this connection, the attitude of Yale University toward a minor but conspicuous faculty member has so far been altogether praiseworthy. Without mentioning Mr. Lynd by name, President Brewster laid down the principle that "the long-run charge which this university bears from its own tradition makes it unthinkable that we should penalize a faculty member for his political position." The government of the United States could well afford to follow the same rule.

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Civil Service Unionism

How To Avert Another Strike . . . Timothy J. Cooney

A major civil service union finally has gone out on strike and completely tied up New York City. It was bound to happen in time. During the past two years such lesser unions as the ferrymen, the welfare workers and the motor vehicle operators have struck, and for the past decade the giants — the Transport Workers, the sanitation men and even the police—have been threatening to do so. The promise of disaster came still closer when the teachers staged their work stoppage, and it was fulfilled when for twelve days the TWU threw its picket lines across the public transportation of the country's busiest city. For almost two weeks, angry citizens, politicians and editorial writers deplored and condemned and offered impossible solutions. The strike was at last settled, but the problem of such strikes was not solved, and no workable solution is possible until the unique phenomenon of present-day civil service unionism is understood.

Until a few years ago, the average civil servant in New York City, and no doubt elsewhere, did not believe he had the right to strike. He was prevented from striking by his own convictions and not by laws or injunctions. Balanced against his relatively low wages and his inability to bargain collectively was the fact that he had job security and was not subject to depression or recession cycles. This seemed like a fair deal to him.

In recent years, however, there has been a marked change of attitude. The younger civil servant is a different breed from those who remember the hard times of the depression. Just having a job is not enough. The old and ineffective civil service associations have become aggressive civil service unions, modeled after industrial unions and led by militant and salaried union leaders. The parallel goes right down to the picket line. Like other unionists the new civil servant not only wants higher wages and shorter hours but now believes that laws, reason and public will to the contrary, he has the moral right to strike in order to win his demands. He does not accept or acknowledge any distinction between himself and workers in the private sector. Since he threatens to strike and actually does strike with impunity—in New York the law against strikes by civil servants has seldom been enforced —he is proved right in practice if not in theory.

There is, of course, a fundamental difference between industrial unions and civil service unions: it rests in the substantive difference between the respective employers and their relationship to the economy. Underlying all labor negotiations in the private sector is an unspoken premise that labor and management understand and accept. Labor cannot demand more than business can give *without going out of business*. As a corollary, and at the risk of moving onto metaphysical ground, a fair wage might be defined as one that business can pay and still make some profit. Obviously, this definition does not apply to the public sector. Government is a nonprofit operation and it cannot go out of business.

The problem, and it is at the heart of the matter, is that in New York City today no agreed upon rationale whatsoever underlies civil service bargaining. Thus there is no objective standard for determining whether the TWU's demands, or demands by similar unions, are justified or unjustified. In his last few years of office Mayor Robert Wagner gave up trying. Increasingly, he agreed to higher and higher wages because crippling strikes were threatened, not because he or anyone else believed that a wage demand was fair or justified. The results have been startling. In 1958 the city's expense budget was under $2 billion; today it is well above $4 billion, and by the end of this fiscal year the city expects to be a half billion in debt. At least 70 per cent of the increase since 1958 has gone into higher wages.

The transit workers and other civil service unionists have had, in a sense, their own internal rationale. At the end of every contract period they demand more money because, since their last contract, other civil service unions have gotten more. There is no end in sight and the future looks grim. Michael J. Quill has always used the threat of a strike to win his demands, and when at last he struck, his men were obviously ready. Other union leaders had better be willing to outdo Mr. Quill if they want to hold the loyalty of their membership.

When Quill said, on his way to jail, that the "second team" of negotiators would be tougher than the first, he was hinting at one of his own problems and the problem of every civil service union leader in New York City. In the militant, if irrational, world of civil service unionism a legion of Young Turks is ready to jump to the fore and develop an impassioned argument along the following lines: We have been sold out; other unions have gotten nice fat contracts for their men; if we strike and stop vital service City Hall will find the money quickly enough; nothing is going to happen to us if we do strike; the public be damned.

Whatever the shortcomings of this argument in terms of truth and civic virtue, there is no doubt that it works, and if a union leader wants to remain a union leader he is well advised to make this speech before one of his juniors makes it. The day he becomes concerned about the city's problems is the day he finds himself an ex-leader.

In short, civil service unionism in New York City has become a runaway engine driven on by competition among unions; civil servants who are willing to strike and won't recognize any laws or arguments to the contrary; and militant union leaders who, for their own protection, must demand more and more and be willing to go to jail to win their demands. This engine has neither a brake nor a governor, and it recognizes no speed limit.

Is there any way out? I believe there is, but my solution is far short of what an angry public may demand. Its only virtue is that

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Timothy J. Cooney, an occasional Nation *contributor, was formerly on the staff of New York City's Commission on Human Rights, and more recently served as assistant to the city's Labor Commissioner, and as an assistant to former Mayor Robert Wagner. He is presently executive secretary to the New York Council Against Poverty.*

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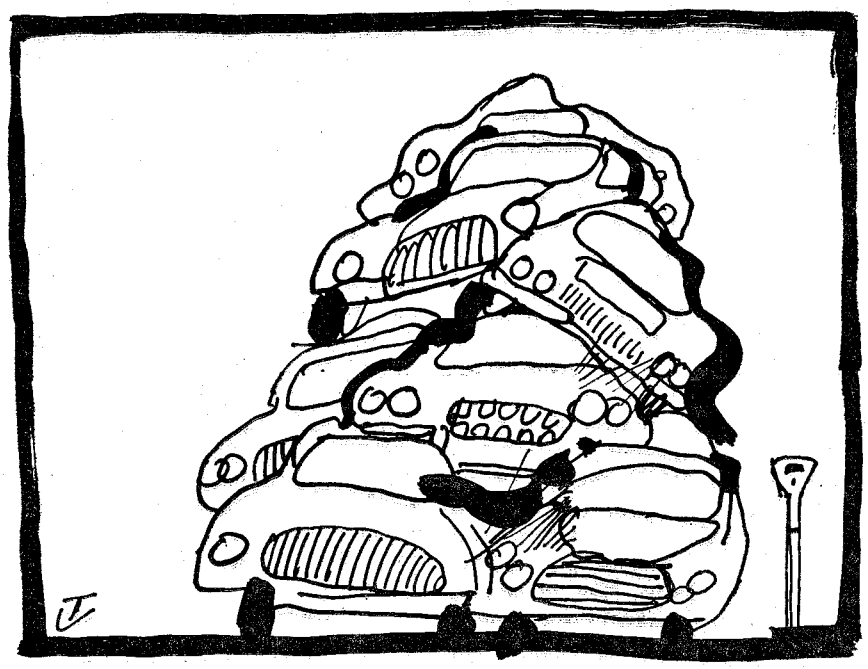
it may work—where solutions arising from the demands of an angry public will not. From the analysis made above, I start with the following assumptions: No punitive legislation or compulsory procedure that distinguishes between civil service unions and other unions is going to succeed, because the unions won't accept or acknowledge the distinction.

Right or wrong, like it or not, civil service unionists consider themselves full-fledged American unionists with all of the rights and privileges of other unionists. In this, they are being no more than realistic, since a qualified unionism, which usually means that the members may shout but may not strike, lacks the power to force a showdown that gives unionism its meaning. In any case, there are just too many unionized civil servants to argue with. Cracking down on them will only strengthen them; jailing their leaders will only rally them; penalizing them or calling out the National Guard will only raise other issues that must be settled before they will go back to work.



Central to my solution is the creation of an independent authority that would recommend wages, hours and fringe benefits for all of New York City's civil servants. This authority would be directed by three distinguished citizens appointed by the mayor to long terms (thus separating them from political maneuvering). They would hold public hearings at which union leaders and all interested parties could speak. They would command the services of a professional staff of researchers, investigators, program planners and analysts. These specialists would be competent to analyze and evaluate such factors as the qualifications for specific jobs, comparable salaries for similar jobs in government and private industry, the New York City cost of living index, etc.

If this authority were as capable and independent as it could be, it would give the city what it now desperately needs—a rational foundation for the discussion of civil service wages. Even if the authority recommended substantial increases for some classes of civil servants, I believe that the mayor and the general public would accept these recommendations rather than risk a retreat to the anarchy that now exists.

In the beginning the civil service unions would probably neither accept the concept of the authority nor its recommendations. Union leaders would, no doubt, add to their standard speech the expletive, "The authority be damned."

The mayor and the public may be severely tested. Yet the recent blackout and the subway and bus strike have proved that New Yorkers are capable of taking much. If they felt that the authority's recommendations were fair, they might well endure the inconvenience that a strike would bring and support a mayor who stood by those recommendations. Thus the solution I offer does not promise that there will be no more strikes—given civil service unionism as it exists today, I can envision no solution that can offer such a promise—but after a testing period I believe that such an authority would greatly reduce the likelihood of walkouts.

I make this prediction because I feel that an authority—always assuming that it proved capable and independent — might ease much of the anxiety and bitterness that have driven civil servants to their present position. The average civil servant can live on what he earns, but he cannot *live with* the thought that others have gotten more. Furthermore, since no one has ever offered him a definition of a fair wage based on any criteria he could accept, it is little wonder he assumed that he was being shortchanged. For as long as he can remember, no budget director or director of personnel has ever voluntarily proposed that he get a raise. He was the forgotten man and it was always a struggle. The only answer to the "politicians" and an apathetic public has seemed to be a militant, industrial-type union that was willing to go on strike.

An authority would ease much of the civil servant's anxiety by sharing it. Regardless of the size of his union or how powerful it is; regardless of who is in City Hall or what the public thinks or doesn't think; even regardless or whether or not he strikes, the authority would be "worrying" about his wages and hours. If they were not fair, the authority would speak with a voice that the mayor and the public would have to heed.

There is one final reason for believing that an authority would be accepted by civil servants. Civil service unionism may have become an irrational force, but civil servants, individually, are no more irrational than the next man. When one speaks to them in private it is at once apparent that they too want a solution, for they too are New Yorkers and they are not unaware of the potential disasters that loom ahead. The subway men will suffer as much as anyone if the police or firemen or hospital workers go out. An authority would in no way restrict their freedom as unionists, but it would offer them an honorable alternative to the present situation.

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ENEMIES OF PROMISE . . .

William C. Thiesenhusen

"We will shape the future through the principles of our Alliance," declared President Johnson last summer in reaffirming his support for the Alliance for Progress, "or we will find it swallowed up in violence that is bred of desperations."

But the fact remains that the nations of Latin America have made only halting progress toward recasting their social and economic structures since 1961 when, at the signing of the Charter of Punta del Este, they promised vigorous reform. It has been nearly three years since ex-President Juscelino Kubitschek of Brazil and Colombian ex-President Alberto Lleras placed the preponderance of blame for the sluggishness of the *Alianza* on its U.S. administration and Latin America's "poor showing" respectively. The time seems ripe for frank discussion of South America's slow headway, particularly in the matter of agricultural reform.

That change will come—with or without the Alliance for Progress—scarcely needs documentation. Experience the world over is that when people are relegated to the economic margins of their own society—which without them becomes steadily more affluent—they will attempt to rectify a situation they perceive as unjust, and will resort to violence if their claims are unheard. In the southern half of the Western Hemisphere a traditional "have and have not" situation is steadily exacerbated as population growth (which will triple the population in the next thirty-five years) adds to the ranks of the disenchanted more rapidly than to those of privilege. It becomes explosive as better communication makes the lower classes painfully conscious of their plight. Mere scale threatens not only riot but revolution.

Those observers who pass off latter-day violence in Latin America as being politically motivated, or more specifically "Communist-inspired," miss the central issue—a well-perceived breach between those who possess and dispense privilege and power and those who have neither. Instead of moving toward equality of opportunity, the gap separating rich and poor is growing. The farm labor force in Chile, for example, making up about 87 per cent of those engaged in agriculture, earns only about one-third of the income generated by that sector of the economy. The top 1 per cent of the agricultural population now receives 25 per cent of the agricultural income. *Campesinos* earn an average net cash income of about $150 a year, a sum inadequate to provide their families with the essentials of life. The vast majority of Chilean agricultural workers have suffered a decline in purchasing power of about one-third over a five-year period because the legislature has failed to raise minimum salaries to compensate for the falling value of the peso. Some agriculturists find ways to evade even the legal minimum. Powerless to organize—the government prohibits agricultural unions except in very special instances—workers have, until lately, fallen into resignation. Even though the Christian Democratic government of Eduardo Frei, which took office in November, 1964, has promised to change the discriminatory labor codes, landlords can be expected to continue informally to discourage agricultural unions.

A 1961 report notes that throughout Latin America farm owners receive incomes twenty to forty times larger than the wages of farm workers. Later research, like that of the Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development (ICAD), shows the differences to be even greater. In the rich cacao plantation area of Bahia, Brazil, the average gross farm income of several large estate owners was 100 times larger than the average annual cash income of a small but typical group of workers interviewed in 1963. If the situation were similar in the United States, a farm hand who cleared $2,000 a year would be working for a proprietor whose gross annual cash farm income was $200,000.

These extremes are not peculiar to Latin America's countryside (although income disparities are usually more marked there); they exist in the city as well. And they are found not only in Chile and Brazil but throughout most of Latin America. Changing the situation by peaceful means is one goal of the Alliance. As a step toward evolutionary progress, some recent commentators have suggested a revision of our two-class stereotype of Latin American society. They note the existence of a substantial middle class, if one judges by occupations normally so identified: white-collar workers, professionals, government workers, small business entrepreneurs, et al.

But the middle group in Latin America, as Philip W. Quigg (drawing on research by Claudio Véliz) has noted, "arose in potential conflict with the industrial worker and the urbanized proletariat." Instead of feeling identity with the working group, most middle elements seem to identify with a privileged upper class. Therefore, the middle stratum has not seriously urged structural reforms which would tend to draw the lower class into the greater society. Allied with the upper class, it favors the *status quo*.

By imitation, Latin American middle and upper groups (with some exceptions) have taken over the consumptionist attitude of the United States middle class—without the long period of savings and investment that preceded the phenomenon in North America. Generally, they seem intent upon improving their own condition without dividing the pie with those below them, and without realizing that the entire pie might be larger in the long run if they did.

Chile's governments were led by the middle group from 1938 to 1952, but Federico Gil, Latin American scholar, has observed of this era: "At no time . . . did the leadership of the temporarily allied government parties attempt any program involving the partition, the expropriation or even the taxation of the landed estates."

Now the informal middle- and upper-class coalition in Latin America—the group "in power" today

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in most of Latin America—feels Alliance for Progress pressure to bring about basic land and tax reforms. Countries requesting aid must move toward fulfillment of the Alliance stipulation that reform be in progress. On the one hand, then, the upper-middle group faces the dissatisfaction of the downtrodden which is increasingly being translated into political leverage; on the other, it is threatened with loss of its own prestige and economic power. An appropriate description of upper-middle-group response to this situation is well expressed by Tancredi in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's *The Leopard*: "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change."

Four years of the Alliance for Progress have opened superficial chinks in the façade of society, but the old foundation stones remain in place. Of course, there are rays of hope. The Social Christian parties, speaking loudly for peaceful but effective reform, are gathering adherents and even power in some Latin countries. Some reforms have been enacted by Latin American parliaments. But we should not be unduly optimistic, despite the fact that since 1960, thirteen agrarian reform laws have been passed in the Central and South American countries that are part of the Alliance for Progress.

The passage of legislation meets a basic Alliance requirement. A quick reading of the complicated laws seems to show each country sincere in its desire for land reform. But often the legislators, themselves members of the privileged classes, have built interminable delays into the law's application. Sometimes the agrarian reform legislation cannot stand by itself—a set of enabling acts must also be passed before anything can be done. The effectiveness of the entire document may then hinge on several of these—or even on a constitutional amendment—not apt to pass a conservative congress.

Expropriation of land for reform purposes is sometimes contingent on demonstrating that present use is inefficient; that is a fluid concept, as hard to define as it is to measure. Land condemnation may become subject to innumerable judicial proceedings and the matter passed from court to court without ever being resolved—or, what is more serious, without anyone's expecting a resolution. And even if the law becomes workable, there is usually no provision for deferred payment in case of expropriation, so land reform must depend again on a recalcitrant congress to vote operating funds. Without a deferred-payment clause, no Latin country, regardless of the generosity of its parliament, can proceed very far with land reform; by definition, the national budget of an underdeveloped country is limited, and land prices are often high.

The slim budget usually allotted to agricultural redistribution implies that few families will be granted land. This number is frequently reduced further because administrators make it a practice to design programs with high costs per family unit—one, that is, which provides settlers with houses, sheds access roads, electricity, redesigned irrigation systems, etc., immediately upon arrival at the colony. In Chile, the reform agency's expenditures for this overhead capital ran above $2,000 per family settled during the pre-Frei government.

To be sure, social and economic overhead capital are important in a country where the rural areas are devoid of many basic facilities. But too little thought has been given to providing colonists with only their rudimentary needs, with equipment of lower priority to be supplied over time through colonist initiative and the earnings of his farm operation. This would spread funds across a larger program or make sums available to improve the productivity on the new farms. A recent United Nations publication shows that the cost of land plus installation varies from an average of $17,000 per family settled in some Argentine projects, to a low of $3,000 to $4,000 in Guatemala and Ecuador.

Where in addition, and as frequently happens, the program is administered by a long-established bureaucratic structure that has been rechristened "agrarian reform agency" merely to meet Alliance terminology, progress is bound to be lethargic. (In Mexico, Bolivia and Cuba, revolutions have been a short cut across such delays, but at a high social—and apparently also economic—cost.) Most accomplishments under recent agrarian reform laws fall far short of announced goals. Under the Center-Right coalition that governed Chile until late 1964, between 10,000 and 12,700 *campesinos* were to be established on their own farms. But in two years of "reform" (1963 and 1964), only about 1,100 were settled. In Colombia, only 1,400 were settled in three years and 16,500 were given titles to lands in the public domain which they already occupied. The records of some other countries—like Panama, Paraguay and Brazil—are even less impressive. Only in Venezuela, where income from oil has made high settlement costs easier to pay, is real progress evident. Land owned by Pérez Jiménez and his cronies went into the public domain after the dictator's demise, and was available for reform use.

But before becoming self-righteous about the "Tancredi attitude" of the Latin Americans, we must recognize that the U.S. attitude toward the Alliance for Progress also supplies some brakes.

The Charter of Punta del Este is a convincing document, and the United States, as an author and signer, declares itself on the side of reform. But a statement of principle is seldom enough to solve a foreign-policy problem, and in complex situations other, even stronger, criteria may produce a different or even opposite effect. Thus our liberal Alliance statements make up only a part of the "bag of tools" our diplomats use for dealing with any given situation in Latin America. Another, often overriding, element is the tendency of U.S. policy makers to view foreign relations in the context of the East-West struggle. Indeed, agrarian reform

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becomes meshed into our policy of containment, not only because all major foreign relations are thus involved but also because land has long been a rallying point for the Left in Latin America. When it evaluates its policy toward Latin America in East-West terms, the United States is reluctant to support any program that coincides with the position of the "populists."

This attitude is the more sweeping because we tend to see the Left as a monolithic group: parties which for internal political reasons must form coalitions with the far Left are considered fully as "Red" as Chinese-style Communists. In some areas of the world our powers of discrimination have sharpened with the Russian-U.S. *détente*, but in Latin America (perhaps because we fear another Cuba or because we have always misunderstood Latin American politics), our classifications are still largely black or white.

At the level where decisions are made, this creates real difficulty. Since each foreign-policy problem must be solved on a case-by-case basis, issues like agrarian reform are shortchanged because of their leftist associations, with persuasive local arguments losing out to global strategy. To the U.S. policy makers, such decisions may seem perfectly logical, but Latin Americans see our support for the solution of their pressing domestic problems as equivocal at best.

Because of its concern with the spread of communism, the United States has a built-in aversion to groups seeking domestic reform, and makes common cause with the most conservative, often even militaristic, forces in Latin America. But there are other reasons why the United States finds the Left repugnant. The stated economic development program of leftist groups usually includes, in addition to agricultural reform, expropriation of at least some of the industrial assets now owned by United States private investors. A desire to nationalize the means of production is rooted in the Left's economic analysis, as is a growing sense of nationalism. But nationalization through expropriation would tend to make the short-run business climate less favorable for American investment. Without much doubt, U.S. aid would shrink accordingly.

Prof. Robert F. Smith reports that although the Alliance for Progress Charter underplays the role of private investment in Latin America, subsequent interpretations have rejuvenated "dollar diplomacy." The Clay Committee's 1963 report on the Alliance for Progress asserts the primacy of public investment and private enterprise, proclaiming nationalization alien to economic development. The Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress seems to take the same line. In 1962, its subcommittee on Inter-American Economic Relationships gave some attention to the need for social reforms, but two years later the basic theme of its report was that the success of the Alliance depends on creating a good climate for business. It denounced any expropriation of private property, even for agrarian reform. Thus, the need to attract venture capital south of the border has been made a central focus of the Alliance. This goal, admittedly important, conflicts with agrarian reconstruction in several ways, and to date reform has lost out at most confrontations.

Our alliance with the Right has a long history in Latin America and is not easily forgotten there—particularly since it is constantly reinforced because the rightists, being the best educated and the most often in power, have the best opportunity to hobnob with our diplomats. Furthermore, contacts between U.S. diplomats and U.S. businessmen are frequent in these countries, if only because of the common language.

The assumption that we habitually support the Right has been fortified recently by the affair of the Dominican Republic. Many Latin Americans say that our action there confirms what they have always known—the United States is a power "dedicated to throttling any revolutionary movement of whatever center-to-left stripe." The recent controversial House resolution, which deemed unilateral intervention "proper" in any country of the Western Hemisphere that was suspected of creeping communism, brought loud and all but unanimous protests from the parliaments of Latin America.

Other problems further complicate the situation. Although our present "official" policy on agrarian reform appears liberal enough, those who carry it out are often holdovers from a former age to whom "reformist" ideas are untried, unproved and unattractive. Thus, preoccupation with the East-West power balance, the threat of expropriation, and policy-making inertia combine to make U.S. backing of agrarian reform considerably less wholehearted than one might expect from a review of those clauses of the Alliance Charter that treat of the subject.

This does not imply that the problems are in themselves easy to solve—it is hard to imagine a situation more complex. But a frank and continuing discussion of the inherent difficulties and possible solutions is in order between statesmen and the public in the United States and Latin America.

Having assessed the lukewarm support that agrarian reform seems to elicit, one instinctively looks for some alternative means to solve the depressing social and economic problems of rural workers in countries south of the Rio Grande. Some see the farm-to-city migration in Latin America as a near repetition of the movement that has taken place in the United States. Here, often in response to higher wages in town, the migration has reduced farm population from more than half of the populace in the mid-19th century to a scant 6.8 per cent in 1964. The process has not yet gone that far in Latin America. Whereas fifteen years ago rural population represented 60 per cent of the total, today rural and urban percentages are about equal. Moreover, the population is swelling and, in absolute terms, the number of people on farms is growing. It might be implied, though, from the experience of developed countries, that eventually the farm problem in Latin America will solve itself as country people move into the cities.

A closer look at the situation shows that only the process of the two farm-to-city migrations is similar; the character of the phenomenon is different. In the boom years of the U.S. move to the city, the promise of jobs was not a mirage. But an extremely large number of peasants in Latin America move to the city out of desperation; they are utterly unequipped for urban employment and life. Upon arrival, they often live in belts of poverty around major urban centers described by one observer as "showing human life at levels of degradation far worse than one finds in the average rural slum." There are few

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jobs because industry is growing slowly. And a job requires skills that the *campesino* "fresh off the farm" is unlikely to have. The education of farm laborers in Latin America is far below that of agricultural workers in the United States, even in the twenties or thirties.

A Venezuelan official summed up the situation recently. He claimed that half of Caracas' 1.3 million people live in shacks, schools fill up as fast as they are built, and 80,000 people come on the labor market each year to compete with the more than 500,000 Venezuelans who can't find jobs even now.

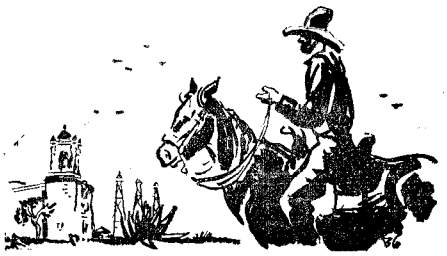
His statement fails to mention another large group of underemployed. In addition to those who move cityward of their own volition, others are forced off the farms by labor-saving machinery. Landlords may find mechanization prestigious or a hedge against inflation. More important, the proprietor's social problems with labor can be partially averted as scarce capital is substituted for bountiful labor. Some Latin governments have encouraged this tendency by equating modernization of agriculture with mechanization, and giving import duty and/or exchange rate "breaks" to those who bring agricultural machinery into the country.

There is another point of difference in the population shifts of the two hemispheres. Agriculture in the United States has been immensely productive—so productive that farm surpluses have grown during the exodus to the cities. In Latin America, however, food supply has not even been able to keep up with population growth. In 1964, the Inter-American Development Bank reported that population in Latin America is growing at a rate of 2.7 to 2.8 per cent annually, yet total farm production has averaged only a 1.6 per cent growth over the past five years. When farmers leave the land (where they at least scrape out a minimum sustenance) they spend the few pennies they earn to buy food, thus inflating the demands on an insufficient supply. Scarcity of food seems to be one of the basic causes for chronic inflation in many Latin American countries.

Economists in most underdeveloped countries doubt that industry can absorb workers even at the rate of natural population increase. Each job created implies a huge investment of capital. Scarce machinery for industrialization is expensive and often must be imported. Foreign exchange is not available for the purpose, since much of the country's scarce credit must be used to bring in food not produced by a lagging agriculture. Besides, industrial markets in Latin American countries are limited and will remain relatively so, despite common-market plans for widening outlets. And goods manufactured in developed countries usually have a cost advantage on the world market. Under these conditions, industrialization will necessarily proceed slowly in Latin America.

For the immediate future, development emphasis in Latin America should be given to improving the agricultural sector by making it more productive; and by employing more people in the countryside —or, at least, not attempting to drain any more from country to city. Developing agriculture will undoubtedly be followed in due time by industrial progress. As Gunnar Myrdal has put it, "any realistic agricultural planning program [for underdeveloped countries] must count on a tremendous increase in the labor force in agriculture."

The basic question about agrarian reform still remains to be answered. Why can't cropping patterns be intensified without agrarian reform and, in the wake of more efficient resource use, provide farm



employment for more people? In Chile, as in other Latin American countries, we have little evidence that the large estate-small holding complex is productive. Chile has a Mediterranean climate and some good soil and water resources, yet agricultural yield seems far below potential. Great Britain, a country with about equal farming area and a far less salubrious climate, reports farm output three or four times higher than Chile.

Land in Latin America is frequently held for prestige purposes or, again, as a hedge against inflation, rather than as a factor of production. One study has noted that in the central zone of Chile, its area of greatest agricultural potential, nearly half the land is devoted to natural pasture. Improved pasture could handle three or four times the number of animals, and even greater production would be possible if this land were planted to more intensive annual crops. Prof. Peter Dorner's studies and those of his students in Chile have noted that increases in productivity per acre of at least between 15 and 20 per cent are possible in the short run and could free, by reducing imports, millions of dollars a year for the Chilean economy.

Perhaps land could be taxed, thus forcing landlords to produce more to meet this overhead expense. Yet over the years, landlords in Latin America have successfully evaded taxation or, more frequently, legislated against realistic valuations and fair tax rates. (Prof. John Strasma reports that this may be changing, at least in Chile, where all real estate has just been revalued.)

In addition to producing less, patterns of farming that are extensive and nondiversified are likely to use less labor than desirable. In fact, as previously asserted, capital is often substituted for labor. There is little question that, with land reform, more people would be productively employed in the country. At least it would be some time before the

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beneficiaries of reform could amass labor-saving capital. What is doubtful is that productivity would really rise under reform; it might well drop still further—at least for a considerable period—as the organization of farming changed.

Of one matter we can be fairly certain: if land reform is defined narrowly as merely splitting up underutilized land and turning it over to *campesinos*, total production on these lands will probably not rise much closer to its potential than it has under the present hacienda system. To be successful, reform must be "integral," in that credit and technical assistance must be supplied. If the formerly landless are deserted after receiving their piece of land, there is no reason to expect that, with little or no previous management experience, they will turn overnight into productive entrepreneurs. Speaking of this task and the one of effecting a reform in the first place, Prof. T. Lynn Smith has called bringing about a wide distribution of land ownership "child's play in comparison with . . . developing the necessary managerial skills on the part of the heads of families whose only roles previously have been the limited ones of the agricultural laborer."

If the Latin American countries are not willing to devote considerable resources and planning to agriculture, once rights over the land are redistributed, the only concrete result of reform may be that the *campesinos* who participate in the reform will themselves eat better. (Admittedly, that is very necessary.) Concurrent with reform, new landowners should probably be made to shoulder realistic tax schedules and/or land-amortization payments to encourage production and to siphon off some of their profits to help pay for general economic development.

Whatever the economic alternatives of reform, it is doubtful that economists will be consulted in the early stages of the matter. A country's decision to engage in, or refrain from, reform, as Doreen Warriner has noted, is usually political. But to economists and other social scientists will fall the difficult job of making reform work.

As for the U.S. role in this process, what we especially need is a foreign policy flexible enough to distinguish between the pressing domestic problems confronting Latin America and the East-West and private business issues, precisely where such distinctions are hard to make; we need somehow to dissociate the genuine desire for vital reforms from our natural reaction to anti-Americanism and our instinctive aversion to leftist attacks on our foreign policy and our economic system. Perhaps we need a different policy for varying kinds of leftist groups. To repeat: there must be more serious and documented discussion of this complex issue.

The current world policy-making situation, suggests Walter Lippmann, "is a vicious circle in which dogmatic communism and dogmatic anti-communism incite and exasperate each other." The way out, he suggests, is by "fostering the ascendancy of national interests over global ideology."

Agrarian reform in Latin America is a case in point.

Peace for Vietnam

THE GOP's NETTLE of SUCCESS

Karl H. Purnell

If President Johnson has reaped a harvest of protest among Americans who deplore his war policy in Vietnam, it is not from any effort by the national leaders of the Republican Party. Not only do Republicans blandly accept the White House commitment of American soldiers to Vietnam, they are even rushing desperately into the President's arms with declarations of approval. It is true that some of the leaders, such as Richard Nixon and Senator Everett Dirksen, find him excessively prudent; they join with the war hawks in demanding escalation. However, the basic GOP position is one of approval of the President's policies.

Republican Minority Leader Gerald Ford has further blunted the possibility of a more feasible party position by demanding, of all things, a formal declaration of war by the Congress. Lest anyone be surprised that these particular Republicans should be so unanimous in their hawklike position, it should be remembered that they are the same men who put Barry Goldwater's nomination across in the San Francisco Cow Palace. One cannot question their consistency.

At the same time, there is serious doubt as to their political sagacity. Nixon, the old pro, apparently felt in his bones the political jackpot awaiting the Republicans when he stated recently that Vietnam could be the major issue in the 1968 elections. Yet Nixon, like his peers, seems to have forgotten that Goldwater lost the 1964 election in part by advocating the hawk position. Furthermore, Dwight Eisenhower won the 1952 election by promising negotiations and peace in Korea, not by undertaking to bomb north of the 38th Parallel. Certainly, Senator Dirksen might remember that Democratic bungling of foreign policy was standard Republican campaign fodder against Wilson and Roosevelt.

Since they are hurt by internal dissension and lack any good domestic issues, it is surprising that these Republican leaders should shun the only apparent issue which might bring them victory in 1968, and which is entirely consistent with the Republican position of the past forty-five years. Admittedly, Republican spokesmen would have to be astute in defining their opposition to the Administration. There is no political advantage to be gained by demanding immediate withdrawal or by urging negotiations that would leave South Vietnam to the whim of a vindictive National Liberation Front.

Nevertheless, the range of practical and responsible alternatives is impressive. A strong stand against further escalation, particularly the bombing of urban centers, could

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do much for the GOP's tarnished image. A program for nonmilitary victory in Southeast Asia by use of substantial economic aid would be a most seductive alternative to the bombs-and-guns technique now being employed with so little success. Republicans also stand to gain by emphasizing the possibility of free elections in South Vietnam as a means for obtaining negotiations.

These and other alternatives exist. The strategic and moral dilemma raised by the prospect of fighting hordes of Asians on their own terrain, where our air and naval might is of little effect, constitutes the best chance the Republicans have had in fourteen years for obtaining a national majority. And, if alternatives to the present military abyss contain a political opportunity for the GOP, the incredible manner in which the present Administration has conducted its operations in Vietnam is a sure-fire issue on which alert Republicans could stage a popular comeback.

The shifts in policy, the evasiveness of the Administration, the lack of candor in explaining to the American people what is happening in Vietnam constitute fair game for an opposition party. Republican spokesmen could have a field day excoriating the President and his advisers for the statements they have made about Vietnam in the past two years.

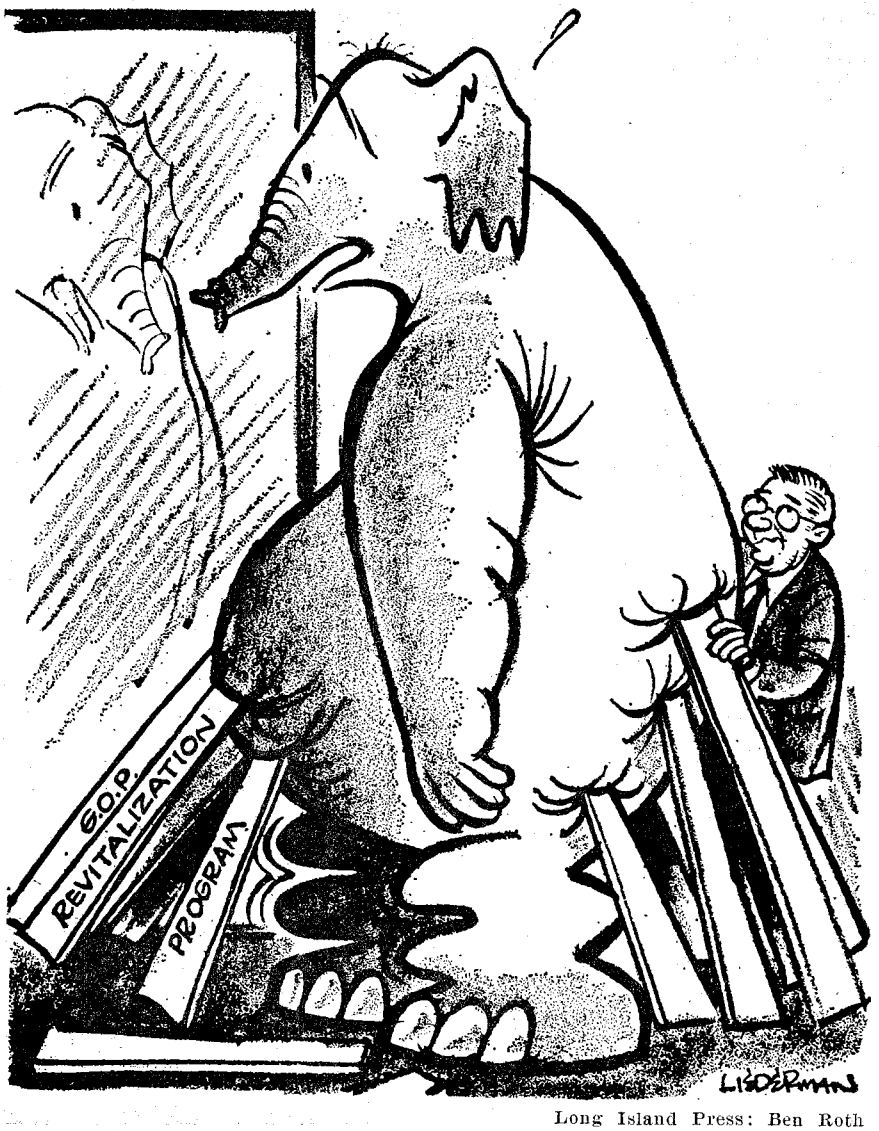
After all, it was John F. Kennedy who stated on the floor of the Senate in 1954 that if the American people were to go to war for the fourth time in this century, "particularly a war which we now realize would threaten the survival of civilization, they had a right to inquire in detail into the nature of the struggle and the possible alternatives." The details on this subject that have been forthcoming from the Administration lately are both sparse and misleading.

For example, in 1962, Secretary McNamara said after visiting Vietnam: "Every quantitative measurement we have shows we're winning this war." In the spring of 1963, Americans were again treated to false hopes when he authorized the announcement that: ". . . we have turned the corner in Vietnam." Now, the Defense Secretary estimates, perhaps with less myopia and more candor, that it will be a "long war."

The question of negotiations has been subject to the same kind of high-level chicanery. On July 13, 1965, President Johnson told a press conference: "I must say that candor compels me to tell you that there has not been the slightest indication that the other side is interested in negotiations or in unconditional discussions." As one commentator wrote later, "Candor did not compel the White House, however, to give a very accurate account of U Thant's message about the peace feelers." The whole sad story of Administration offers to discuss a solution in Vietnam is an issue in itself which could be exposed for public discussion to the advantage of the Republican Party.

Even Representative Ford recognized that. In a statement appearing in a recent Republican National Committee monthly magazine, he suggested that Johnson's actions in connection with the peace feelers "ought to make the American people a little dubious about freedom of information and the right to know as far as their government is concerned."

The shifts in what the White House is and is not prepared to do make interesting, if frustrating, reading. Dean Rusk at the beginning of 1965, decried the idea of negotiations. Yet in July, Johnson vowed that unconditional negotiations would be acceptable. In 1964, the White House was unwilling to recognize the Vietcong in any talks, but by spring of last year they were welcoming them to a bargaining table. The whole question of why our troops are in Vietnam at all should be subjected to closer scrutiny. According to Rusk, "Our task remains, therefore, that which President Johnson has often stated—namely to assist our friends in South Vietnam to repel the aggressor against them and at the same time to keep open every possibility of a peaceful settlement." What does the Secretary mean by "assist our friends"? Are American boys



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really dying by the hundreds in order to keep South Vietnamese villagers free from Vietcong rule? Or does Mr. Rusk really mean that the United States is attempting to stop Communist expansion 50 miles from the border of China?

Furthermore, just how far is the United States willing to go in assisting its friends? In 1964, this meant supplying them with arms and advice. A few months later it meant defending strategic bases with our own troops. Finally, it came to mean search-fix-and-destroy missions by U.S. Marines pitted against the Vietcong army. Does assisting friends mean that next we are to fight China on the Asian mainland? Of this last prospect, President Eisenhower said in 1961, "no man could be more bitterly opposed to getting the United States involved in a hot war in that region than I am."

Republican spokesmen who were willing to ask questions about the policy statements being made by Administration officials might well be surprised by the reaction they would get from the American people. An honest and candid dialogue on the issue of Vietnam has been demanded of the Democratic Administration by a large and responsible segment of the American people. That this has not been forthcoming is an unparalleled opportunity for a GOP strategy that would be both politically useful and patriotic in the right sense of the word. Messrs. Ford, Nixon, et al., get close to the issue every so often. But their obsession with more bombs and their fear of dealing with the vital questions have prevented them from attaining the role of responsible minority leaders by advocating a policy for peace and suggesting an end to secrecy.

Perhaps the final irony in all this is that the most promising Republican heroes of 1964 became the disappointing mutes of 1965. The Scrantons, Rockefellers, Romneys, Percys and others have steered safely clear of this most vital issue of the '60s. Once again their reluctance has allowed the Old Guard to step into the limelight, thus dimming the hopes of progressive, thoughtful Republicans throughout the country. The war in Vietnam is likely to continue for a long time. The Johnson Administration will, if present and past tactics continue, be the legitimate target for responsible criticism. If the Republicans realize in time the potential of the opportunity that waits to be seized, there may yet be a serious struggle for the White House in 1968. As yet, this prospect is unlikely.

Strip-Mine Morality

THE LANDSCAPING OF HELL . . . . Wendell Berry

"No!" interrupted the doctor. "There is no peace and no rest in the development of material interests. They have their law, and their justice. But it is founded on expediency, and is inhuman; it is without rectitude, without the continuity and the force that can be found only in moral principle."

Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo*

I have had quite a bit of trouble with this. I know what it means. Our homes are being destroyed . . . our wildlife destroyed, our peace destroyed . . . our dead rooted out of the grave.

Elder Dan Gibson of Fisty, Ky., at a hearing on new strip-mine regulations

Port Royal, Ky.

At Frankfort, Ky., last August 25 and October 4 and 5, there was a hearing on three new strip-mine regulations proposed by the Strip Mining and Reclamation Division of the Kentucky Department of Natural Resources. These new regulations were later adopted and put into effect, and now even stricter measures are pending before the present session of the state legislature. And so there begins to be some evidence that the state government has at last undertaken a serious interest in one of the state's most urgent problems. But since they face a powerful and determined opposition, the supporters of Governor Breathitt's new legislation might do well to consider the attitude and the morality displayed by the mining companies at the hearings of last August and October.

The proposed rules, as was made clear, were based on the careful research of trained men. Their purpose was to control—if not stop, then at least reduce—the erosion and water pollution that have so far been the inevitable by-products of strip mining. The gist of much of the testimony of the division's expert witnesses was that the authors of the regulations had striven toward a maximum leniency. For instance, the table of standards that would regulate contour stripping of the steep slopes of East Kentucky was based upon a safety factor of one, which would assure control only under ideal conditions—the lowest possible safety factor. "To recommend a factor lower than one," a University of Kentucky professor of Civil Engineering testified, "is to recommend failure." It was also stated, without contradiction by the coal companies, that of the 112 coal operations in East Kentucky all but twenty-two were at present working within the proposed limits as to extent of cut and degree of slope—which suggests that the regulations are lenient indeed.

But in spite of the minimal nature of the proposals, the opposition of the coal companies was inflexible and absolute. The company lawyers in their rebuttal made it clear that they would not be satisfied except by the defeat of even the least attempt to establish not only stricter controls but *any* controls whatsoever. They displayed no disposition to compromise, and no interest in discovering less destructive ways of mining. (Their witnesses indicated that the companies spend little or nothing on experimentation which might lead to less wasteful methods of extraction and reclamation.) The testimony of the expert witnesses who appeared in behalf of the companies was peculiarly clouded and disordered by the assumptions and intentions of the company lawyers, and by the testimony of several coal operators who also appeared as witnesses.

Wendell Berry is a poet, now living in Kentucky. His latest collection of poems is The Broken Ground *(Harcourt, Brace & World).*

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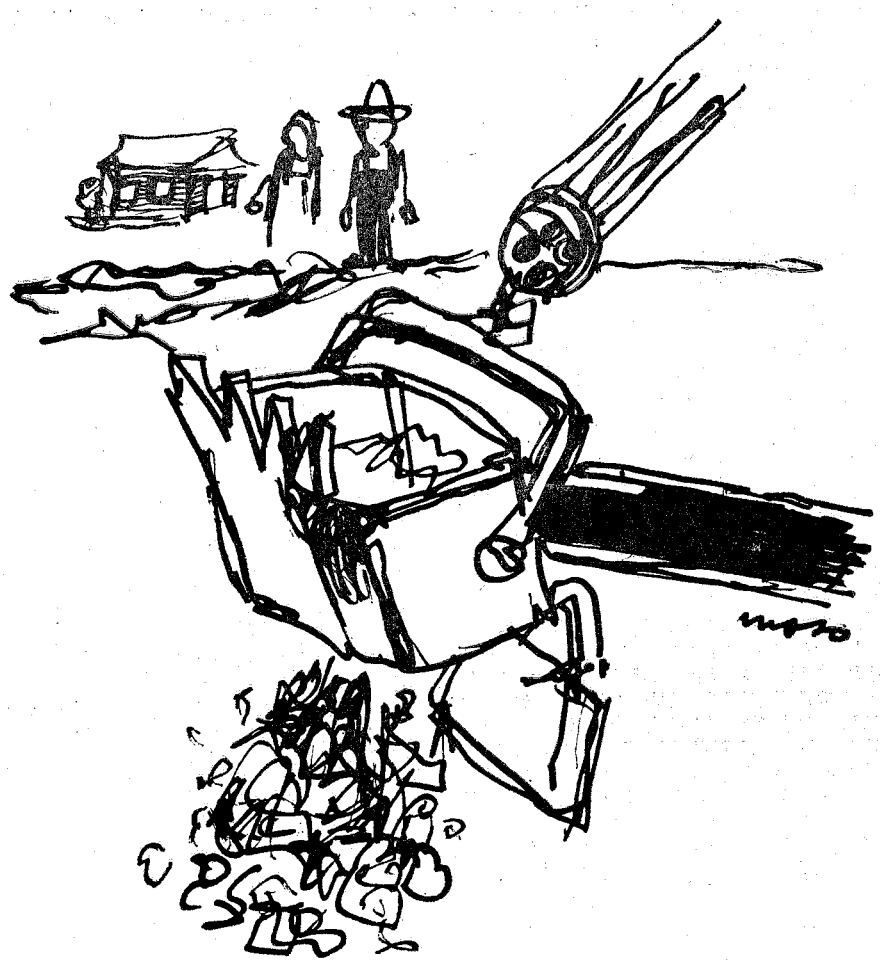
There was a very obvious intent to use scientific evidence to prove that the best method of mining is the one that is most profitable, and that the best method of reclamation is the one that is cheapest. There was much yielding to the temptation to present theory and opinion as fact, and to look upon the failure to discover a remedy as proof that there is no remedy.

The testimony of one after another of the company witnesses turned on the same two arguments: (1) Any regulation that would reduce profit would be wrong; (2) control is impossible, in any case, because of the diversity of mining conditions ("every job is different"). I believe that most, if not all, of the scientists who testified for the coal companies repeated the second argument, as if ignorant or oblivious of the moral and legal—and scientific — implications. One of them, F. A. Braley of Pittsburgh, a former member of the Ohio River Valley Sanitation Commission, testified that there is not much that can be done about acid water from the mines ("a very minor factor as far as water pollution is concerned"): "Best thing to do is pay for the fish that you kill and forget about it." This was pronounced with an oracular glee unaccountable in a scientist. And one of the engineers admitted that he had got his figures, in connection with an alternative proposal which would favor the coal operators, from the coal operators.

Instead of the proposed maximums of a solid bench* width of 60 feet on a slope of 30 degrees, the operators almost unanimously asked for a solid bench of 175 feet on a slope of 35 degrees. At least one of them suggested regulations that, under cross-examination, proved to be not only more lenient than the ones proposed, but more lenient than the ones already in effect.

There was in the statements and questions of the coal company attorneys, and in the testimony of the operators, the unmistakable implication that anything can be justified by profit; that a man may own the land in the same sense in which he would own a piece of furniture or a suit of clothes; it is his to exploit, misuse or destroy altogether should he decide that to do so would be economically feasible. The question of the morality of any practice, for these men, has been completely replaced by the question of its profitability: if it makes money it is good; if it makes money for *them* they are doomed and eager to defend it. Evident in the testimony of some was the assumption that the steep mountain sides, now being ruined on an almost unbelievable scale and at great speed, are good for nothing else.



In short, the strategy of the coal companies was simply to ignore or redefine the issue. The issue, so far as the division was concerned, was to determine how much control there should be. The coal companies hardly bothered to deal with that question. The issue they persisted in raising and speaking to was whether or not there should be any control at all.

At the close of the hearing one of the company lawyers rose to offer the "assurance" that, though the operators are working for profit, they do not wish to do so at the expense of the public welfare, or the welfare of their neighbors. They're concerned about the economic factor, he said, because they operate on a narrow margin of profit. There are a lot of irresponsible people in the coal business, he admitted, but he predicted reassuringly that those irresponsibiles will bring about their own failure. He did not explain this process; presumably they will be dealt with by the same just and unerring Fate that so effectively deletes irresponsibility from the legal profession.

If the formalities and quibblings of the hearing room tended to diminish the urgency of the strip-mining problem, if the rebuttal of the coal companies seemed to imply that the issue of control was extremely debatable and surrounded by doubts, one had only to travel for a few hours on the back roads of East Kentucky to acquire a knowledge that would show the coal companies' self-justifications to be not only arrogant but vicious—and the division's proposals to be mild.

Standing at the edge of the bench of a new strip mine on the mountain in back of the coal camp of Hardburley, one can look down into a narrow cove at a house which might reasonably serve as model

* The "solid bench" is the horizontal plane of the cut in the mountainside.

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and emblem of the predicament of the whole region. As mountain houses go, this is an exceptionally good one. It has been well cared for. There is a neat grassy yard with a hedge fence, and a garden. The slope above it has been planted in young pines—undoubtedly with the help of the federal reforestation program. One can see, even from the height of the mine bench, that a man has taken a proud stand there, has put into the place the long and dear investment of his attention and love and work and hope; that because of the expenditure of himself there he has come to be in that place what he would not have come to be in any other place on earth. And one cannot stand there looking down without some sense of the great value, the great human potential—beyond profit making and productivity, and all our other fashionable and belittling sociological measures—of that man's response to the demands and attractions of that place.

But overhanging the house on three sides is the spoil bank of the mine. When I was there—in dry weather, soon after the cut had been opened—the spoil was already beginning to slide. The rest of the story is sorrowfully predictable. As soon as the winter rains have soaked the ground, great masses of muddy spoil will begin to flow down the slope toward the house, destroying the timber and all the life of the mountainside as it comes. Since there is no natural law that protects the plantings and buildings of men, it is probable that the descending spoil will eventually destroy the stand of young pines, the garden, the yard and the house itself. Or if the slide stops short of the house, the acid water from the opened coal seam will get into the well and make it unfit to use. It will pollute and kill the stream in the crease of the cove; where it once ran clear and glittering over the rocks it will begin to slide over a residue of mine filth, yellow, greasy-looking, stinking, utterly dead. Waters farther down will be polluted in their turn. And following the pollution will come the rubble and mud, filling up the stream beds, increasing the hazard of floods, destroying the health and the beauty of whole valleys. If the man of the house is not forced to move out of the danger of the sliding spoil, if in spite of all he chooses to stay, then he will live in a place as ugly and desolate as a city dump — the place, his life in relation to it, his hopes, his work, all as utterly destroyed as if bombed. And what then will his dreams be, and his hopes? How will he live then without a bitterness that will corrode and destroy him—and that none might dare hope would destroy only him?

Or one might drive up the valley road along Clear Creek at the foot of the same mountain—feeling the quietness and pleasantness of the pretty valley, and then coming aware of the presence in the tributary coves of the gray looming masses of spoil; coming aware that one is entering a doomed place—to see the story's end, not in prediction, but in fact: a house literally swept from the mountainside by a flow of mud and rubble from a spoil bank. And below the house, seeing the sterile earth and rock and splintered timber already cramming in to choke the little stream that runs there, one realizes that through its comely valley Clear Creek already runs as dead as a sewer.

Or one can travel the Little Shepherd Trail, recently built along the backbone of Pine Mountain to attract tourists to see the natural beauty of Kentucky. But even there if one wishes to specialize in natural beauty one dare not look to the east, for on that side, paralleling the Trail for many miles, the most prominent feature of the scenery is a huge strip-mine scar in the side of Big Black Mountain. After one looks to the east the mountains to the west will seem to stand precariously in the same storm light that surrounds the bison and the whooping crane. To look east is to receive the poison of a doom that one did not expect at all to come upon in the woods.

Most of the mineral rights in the Kentucky mountains were bought up sixty or so years ago, long before present mining practices had become imaginable, for as little as $1 an acre. If the price were all that was objectionable in those transactions, that alone would be cause to suspect any good intentions ever professed by the coal companies. But that is far from all.

Most of these purchases were legalized by deeds which conveyed, in addition to the ownership of the mineral, the right to build such roads, tipples, pit openings, etc., as would be necessary to remove the mineral from the property. The Kentucky courts—for reasons that may safely be left to the imagination—have until now held that this right implies the right to strip mine a person's farm or tract of timber without further payment. In other words, the surface rights on a piece of property, the mineral rights of which are held by a coal company, are now virtually worthless. At any time it pleases, the company may overturn the surface and whatever is on it—timber, croplands, buildings, roads, graveyards — without paying compensation or damages. And the point is not that this is legally possible, but that it is *being done*. Now, in the mountains of East Kentucky, it is common practice. The following complaint, printed in *The Hazard Herald* on September 30, is not unique, but typical:

> *. . . they brought a scraper and pushed red dog from the road over into my garden and yard. When I got after them about this, they promised to get the red dog off my property and to replace my fence. My fence and fence posts are still lying flat on the ground where they left them. . . . One of their bulldozer operators unloaded his bulldozer right in the edge of my yard, drove it over a weeping willow tree that was about fifteen feet tall, breaking the tree off level with the ground. The men . . . told me that this . . . operator had been shell shocked in the war so he didn't know any better. So one cannot help wondering if all of these men have been shell shocked as none of them seems to have any respect for the other man's property. Next, the culvert at Jack's Branch was stopped up, by mud, rocks, and trees . . . and flooded my barn, my pig pen, washed away a large stack of lumber, and washed out my chicken lot.*
>
> *You can call their representative about all of this, and he tells you he has nothing to do with it. . . . Finally I managed to get a couple of calls through to this operator, but he practically makes fun of me for trying to get him to take care of the damage he has done to my property. I wonder what this man would do if someone treated him in the way he has treated me.*

When the hearing was being held at Frankfort, a number of boulders (as large, it was estimated, as 60 tons) were allowed to roll off the bench of a strip mine into the vicinity of homes; three families were forced to move out for a time to avoid the danger. No warning had been given. (An officer of the com-

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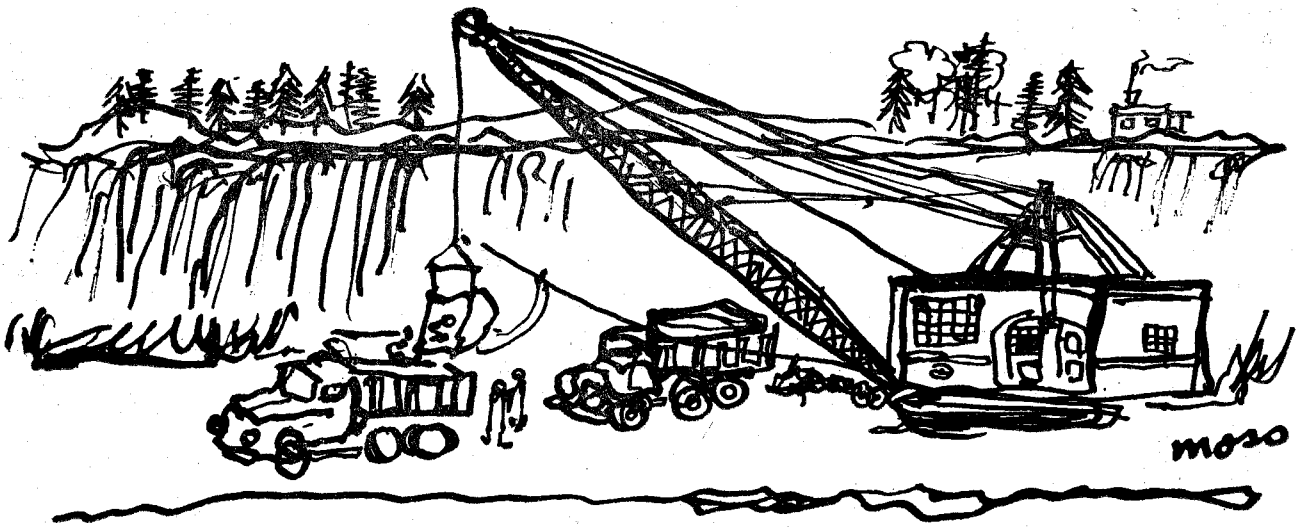

pany whose mine this was, testifying in Frankfort, said that it was "possible" that such incidents might have taken place, but he could not "remember" that any had.) At about the same time similar boulders were rolled across a county road at a time when a school bus might have been passing, again without any warning to anybody. One afternoon a housewife discovered, only by accident, that a blast was to be set off in a strip mine immediately above a road which a school bus would soon be traveling, and was able to call the principal in time for the children to be kept at school until the danger had passed.

The mining companies, then, have made it abundantly clear that they will destroy anything, they will stop at nothing, so long as the result can be inked in black on their accounting sheets. They have been abetted by the mischief and greed of local officials, by public indifference, by state paralysis, by federal cross-purposes and confusion. Against them there has been only a local organization of small landowners, The Appalachian Group to Save the Land and the People, headed by Leroy Martin of Hazard.

It has become plain that if there is to remain any hope at all for the region, strip mining, at least in its present methods, will have to be stopped. Otherwise, all the federal dollars devoted to the region's poor will have the same effect as rain pouring on an uprooted plant. To recover good hope and economic health the people need to have their land whole under their feet. And much of their land, seemingly beyond the reach of the bemused and fumbling powers that might have saved it, has already been destroyed.

To destroy a forest or an ecology or a species is an act of greater seriousness than we have perhaps yet grasped, and it is perhaps of graver consequence. But given even a comparatively short time, these destructions will mend. The forest will grow back, the natural balances will be restored, the ecological gap left by the destroyed species will be filled by another species. But to destroy the earth itself is to destroy all the possibilities of the earth, among them the possibility of recovery. The land destroyed by strip mining is destroyed forever; it will never again be what it was; it will never be what it would have become if let alone. Such destruction — which can now be accomplished on a vast scale by a few men in a short time—makes man a parasite upon the source of his life; it implicates him in the death of the earth, the destruction of his meanings. Those men who send the bulldozer blades into the mountainsides bear the awesome burden of responsibility for an act that no one can fully comprehend, much less justify.

And though violence to the earth must seem in the long view to be the gravest of their offenses, one is no less troubled by their violence to justice. For do not all our rights have as their ultimate expression and meaning the right of a man to be secure in his own home? When this right is no longer defended by any power greater than himself, his days begin to come to him by accident, in default of whatever caprice of power may next require his life. When the possessions and households of citizens are no longer honored by the acts, as well as the principles, of their government, then the concentration camp ceases to be one of the possibilities of human nature and becomes one of its likelihoods.

The new strip-mine legislation that Governor Breathitt is asking the 1966 legislature to pass would, according to the Louisville *Courier-Journal,* "come close to making the coal companies leave the land in the shape they found it." It would require that, in mining operations on steep slopes, the overburden be piled back in the cut, rather than pushed down the mountainside; it would promote an interstate strip-mining compact to create uniform controls among the states; it would stop damage to private property, and in other ways limit the surface destruction.

Today, before the enactment, and enforcement, of this legislation, some skepticism is still in order, but one must be encouraged by the apparent willingness of the Governor to risk measures based on an honest evaluation of the need. The new bills, if they are not so strict as some might have liked, are nevertheless more strict than might have been expected. They are too strict, they too willingly risk a bitter fight and the making of powerful enemies, to be merely a gesture. And so, in a state where political conflicts tend to be purely political, these bills give reason to begin to hope.

What is particularly hopeful about them is that they seem to be an effort by the state to pre-empt its own political and moral ground. If they are passed and enforced, we may be spared the necessity of a federal solution. And that—in a time when the federal government

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is often not only the ultimate authority but also the most immediate—is a most pleasing prospect.

No one, I think, welcomes the intervention of federal power in the affairs of a state, except as a last resort. That seems the crudest of solutions. It is not a moral solution at all. In being forced to do what is right, men lose the dignity of being right. The right itself is debased as an aim and incentive.

A state solution to the strip-mining problem is, of course, less desirable than a personal solution. One wishes that the *persons* who own the mineral rights and run the mines had taken for themselves the prerogative of responsible and just behavior. If they had been willing to govern themselves strictly enough, it seems unlikely that they would now face the prospect of *being* strictly governed. But a state solution is, by the same token, more desirable than a federal one. The closer to home the correction is made, the better it is—the more moral it is.

Mining interests will, as a matter of course, bitterly oppose the new laws. They can be expected to argue, as they have before, that further controls will seriously impair the coal economy, and that to impair the coal economy will be to impair the economy of the state. Their moral poverty is shown by the fact that this, their principal argument, has already been publicly discredited. It is now generally known that, while their profits are enormous, their contribution to the state's economy is small. Their property taxes, for instance, are notoriously low, and Kentucky has not imposed a severance tax. That in the last three-quarters of a century coal worth billions of dollars has been mined in East Kentucky, with the result that the region is now a "depressed area," ought to testify sufficiently to the real nature of the coal industry's contribution to the state's economy.

Another danger, not so much to the passage of the legislation as to its ultimate effectiveness and meaning, may lie in the idea of "control." There is a possibility that the legislation can have its fullest meaning only as an intermediate step, leading toward a law that will abolish strip mining altogether. Nagging at the hope aroused by the Governor's bills is the fear that the idea of controlled destruction may be as much a rationalization, as potentially a delusion, as the idea of limited war.

Still another danger is the possibility that the proposed laws will be looked on simply as a local solution to a local problem. Their importance seems to me to be much greater than that. They represent what may be the most advanced effort on the part of a state to deal with the problem of strip mining. But more significantly, they are part of an effort, still young and faltering, to correct our abuses of the earth. They are part of an awareness that the earth belongs not only to us but to our children. They take a stand against a crippling and peculiarly modern discrepancy between power and principle, the predicament of men whose use of the most powerful machines is governed by a morality that would be barely adequate to the use of a team of mules. The strip-mine issue brings to light only one of many monstrous possibilities created by the selfish use of principle—which is to say, contempt for principle—and by a moral climate in which a man can be, without discomfort to his conscience, *only* a coal operator, or only a doctor or only a general.

In attempting to control the local activities of a few men, Governor Breathitt and his supporters have become, in fact if not by intention, the opponents of a widespread and widely respected set of attitudes toward life and toward the earth: the assumptions, inherited from the frontier, that the natural world is an enemy to be conquered and exploited, and that its riches are inexhaustible; the identification of economic license with political freedom, and the corollary that a free man is somehow morally obligated to get rich, his worth directly proportionate to his wealth; the willingness to be subsidized by posterity, to become rich at the world's expense.

LETTERS

(Continued from inside front cover)

Siglo XXI. There is hope, then, that there will be a Spanish edition of *Pedro Martinez*. And if *The Children of Sánchez* created an uproar, *Pedro Martinez* may produce an earthquake.

M. Tejada

Adequate counsel

New York City

Dear Sirs: I sympathize with Margaret A. Fellows' defense of the memory of Emanuel Bloch, attorney for Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (letters column, *The Nation*, Dec. 27). It usually serves no purpose to slur anyone's memory, especially of one who, like Bloch, went through so much agony in a fight against overwhelming odds.

However, Fred J. Cook, in his review of *Invitation to an Inquest* makes a valid point; as the trial minutes in the Rosenberg case show, *Gold was not cross-examined.* It is incredible to any attorney versed in the trial of criminal cases that this should have occurred. Contrary to what Miss Fellows states, cross-examination of a witness does not depend on whether you have evidence which will contradict the testimony given by the witness. The purpose of cross-examination is to attack the witness' credibility. Since Gold left the stand without being cross-examined, the jury was permitted to believe that Gold's story was true. . . .

Although we cannot undo the Rosenberg result, we must understand that every defendant needs adequate counsel, not *any* counsel. This understanding is of prime importance today in view of the trend to provide indigent defendants with counsel paid by government. Such counsel should be experienced, independent, and possessed of the necessary determination to fight for their clients. Otherwise, we shall continue to witness the conviction and punishment of innocent people.

Samuel B. Waterman
Attorney at Law

Right to petition

New York City

Dear Sirs: Your readers might be interested to know of the difficulties I have encountered in trying to circulate the Freedom House petition, which supports the American commitment in Vietnam, at the New School for Social Research where I am a part-time student. . . . The New School just plain forbids me to collect signatures for this petition in its lobby, although analogous privileges plus the use of meeting rooms are generously bestowed upon the New School Radical Union and the New School Committee to End the War in Vietnam. . . . Currently I am pinning my hopes on the Civil Liberties Union, which has kindly interested itself in this matter, to restore the New School to the path of righteousness.

Jules Sandock

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BARBARA POWERS

She Married a Sky Spy . . . . . David Cort

The celebrated case of the U-2 pilot, Francis Gary Powers, shot down near Sverdlovsk in the Urals, could certainly not be closed until we heard what Powers' divorced wife had to say. This critical lacuna has now been filled by a paperback called *Spy Wife*, by Barbara Gay Moore Powers and W. W. Diehl (Pyramid, 60c).

Absurd, ignominious and barely readable though this true confession is, it also gives us some backdoor information, which we must appreciate, about the style of the Central Intelligence Agency, and the people it hires, not to speak of their families. From a moderately pretty and commonplace Georgia girl we ought to be able to read the truth, if we learn how to read her.

And so, what sort of girl is Barbara? She is the product of a representative Georgia family. Her mother, who is a matron in the Milledgeville mental hospital, has had four husbands: #1 disappeared, #2 died of a heart attack, #3 an alcoholic, was committed to the asylum, #4 also an alcoholic and also committed, was released. When the U-2 case broke, it meant to her primarily that her son-in-law was a $30,000-a-year man; she began spending on that scale, and got violent about it. Later, the family followed its magic formula by committing Barbara for alcoholism. However Barbara, who can type 160 words a minute, is not stupid and was out in five weeks. Her problem was not only alcohol; it was, she said, that her mother could outdrink her. Barbara looks on liquor as high style; her mother is more Georgian about it.

Powers, whom Barbara married while he was an Air Force lieutenant, apparently had no problems. Originally a shy farm boy, he was accomplished in archery, skin diving, tennis, bowling, hunting and speleology—a natural athlete. If we can believe Barbara, he never told her — after he joined Lockheed, fronting for the CIA—what he was doing. Eventually he offered her the cover story of "weather reconnaissance." This fact tells a good deal about both his taciturnity and his conjugal love.

Barbara's character comes out in her memoir style: of her wedding night, "Lordy, but how that Ridge Runner of mine could make love!"; after a miscarriage, "Gary was demanding my body within four days"; of the Parthenon, "its 48 [there are 46] great columns are thrilling to behold," and other dutiful tourist raptures. The Russians allowed her three hours alone with Powers in his cell. She says that under the pretense of holding hands they scribbled coded CIA messages on each other's palms. (This sounds preposterous, but how could anyone invent such nonsense?) A moment later, she says, she was naked ("stark," naturally) and they brought it off three times in the allotted three hours, doubtless scribbling code meanwhile on each other's anatomies. Back in the United States, the CIA's main line of interrogation was to determine that she was sure the man she had seen was Powers.

A good deal of *Spy Wife* is given to repleading her case at the divorce, and in a few years these passages will bore even Barbara. They may interest her mother's town of Milledgeville, where the bystanders included the late Flannery O'Connor whose fictional version of that society is in no way contradicted here.

At the end Barbara says that her secondary aim, after defending her fair name, is to expose "the highly questionable machinations" of the CIA. In support of this aim, she cites *The Nation* several times. The impression does come through that the CIA habitually acts with dreamy extravagance and summary haste. On May 6, 1960, five days after Powers' capture, two CIA men appeared at his wife's trailer in Adana, Turkey, at 5 A.M. and bundled her off (with a broken leg) to America. The CIA supplied the U-2 group with the "best houses" in Adana, described by Barbara as hovels, then with 50-foot house trailers. The group was forbidden to associate with other Americans, and thus entertained one another at unending cocktail parties. A C-47 was always available to fly the wives all over the Eastern world. Powers, when caught, was equipped with a poison needle in a silver dollar in case he felt like committing suicide. (He isn't the type.) When Powers was released, the CIA hid him out, first at the CIA-staffed Ashford Farms near Bellevue, Md., for twenty-four days, then whisked him with Barbara over the countryside in convoy, telling them to duck to the floor when passing through villages. At Powers' divorce, a CIA man was in court to nod permission to Powers to answer questions.

The CIA's every action breathes decision but not thought. What it needs is somebody who can think second or third thoughts.

Beyond this, one may wonder whether America typically produces espionage types who are not also automatic security risks. The college wild men, the check bouncers, the remittance men have not been accepted and tamed here, as they have in England. Actors and public relations men might be suitable for some CIA functions, but in America they prefer their careers. Perhaps a promising CIA crop is now being nurtured in the beatniks, after they calm down, or rev up. Perhaps the CIA should be taken over bodily by the high-pressure news magazines, with special assignments for *True* and *Playboy*. I wish I could solve the agency's personnel problem, but I doubt that espionage is a national talent.

Of course, Powers was not a spy; he was a mechanic and, so saying, James Donovan was able to negotiate the exchange of one true spy, Rudolph Abel, for three Americans, including Powers. Donovan flew home with Powers on February 10, 1962, and has this to say: "Powers was a special type. People at home had been critical of his performance. . . . Yet in charity, suppose you wished to recruit an American to sail a shaky espionage glider over hostile Russia. . . . Powers was a man who, for adequate pay, would do it, and as he passed over Minsk, would calmly reach for a salami sandwich."

Aside from the fact that the sandwich was Spam, pimiento and tuna fish, many men would settle for that much of an apostrophe.

David Cort is a frequent Nation *contributor.*

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Pathology of Undevelopment

THE FERMENT OF REALISM: American Literature, 1884-1919. By Warner Berthoff. The Free Press. 330 pp. $5.95.

Sherman Paul

This book, the first in a seven-volume history of American literature, is a remarkable essay in literary history. It has what Mr. Berthoff, in discussing the literature of argument, considers the classic qualities of the arts: "original perception, compositional intelligence, and concordant style." Its intellectual performance is sustained and will delight those who, already moderately informed about the literature and history of the period, take pleasure in discrimination and judgment and elegant formulation. From Henry James, the most complete and accomplished writer of the period, Mr. Berthoff has learned the requisites of art and criticism, and while he tests for the one, he practices the other, showing himself to be, as he says of James, "exactly discriminating in judgment [and] steadily perceptive in defining the virtue and limitation of individual cases."

His book surmounts most of the difficulties (and tediousness) of this loose genre by being literary history in a precise sense. Artfully composed of individual cases, it is a history of formal achievement or, better, a celebration of the moments in our history of artistic mastery. Mr. Berthoff characterizes writers and defines their artistic (formal and moral) success and failure. In reassessing the work of Twain's last years he indicates his rule: ". . . there is little point in making false claims for the writings conveying it [the spectacle of Twain's compassion and anguish]. They belong, surely, to the tortuous natural history of the American spirit but not to the creative record of American literature."

The literary moments are few—that is the lesson of this history and, if treated as rigorously, probably of the remainder of our history. The landscape is as bleak as that surveyed by Van Wyck Brooks, only the reason is to be found less in the pressures of a hostile environment than in deficiencies of craftsmanship and moral insight. Berthoff is as concerned as Brooks with the failure of American writers, but where Brooks inveighed in their behalf and gave them a usable past and a sense of the literary life, Mr. Berthoff instructs them in the requirements of high literature and sets before them, when our history permits, the masters who, for him as for Eliot in the essay on tradition and the individual talent, are permanently available teachers. (This, incidentally, is a principle guiding his sense of continuities.) His judgment of most of the period is contained in a remark on the literary nationalism of magazines like *The Seven Arts* and the pretwenties *Dial* which, he notes, did not speak "so clearly for new standards of judgment and performance" as their European counterparts: "It is an appealing faith, but it was not one by which writers were likely to get their proper practical education and come into their mature growth."

Like many critics before him, Berthoff is troubled by this conspicuous problem of nurture. He says of Ellen Glasgow, for example, that "what once seemed an exemplary career in the service of a steadily maturing art now presents itself as one more monotonous case history in the pathology of American undevelopment"; of Willa Cather, that "she matured late and hardened early, in the American fashion"; of Frost, that he cherished his personal and technical individuality at the expense of "another kind of development that can best be described as imaginative and moral." His touchstone of the middlebrow writer, a new phenomenon then, is a "thoroughly parasitic" regard for craft, an "underprovided" imagination. His summary judgment of such critics as Babbitt, More and Brownell is that none of their work "contributed much to the effort of the significant artists and writers of the period. . . ." Mr. Berthoff does not look to any special virtue of the American soil, as the literary nationalists did, for the necessary nourishment, and his endorsement of expatriation, formally completing the argument and design of his book, is an endorsement of education. The young writers—as if having come to the conclusion of this book—seek out the masters and critics who can teach them their craft. (In his previous book, *The Example of Melville*, Mr. Berthoff pursues this end.)

Mr. Berthoff's judgments are strict and tend to depress the desire one has to read the many books his own genuine gusto for literature has led him to read. One assents to a comment made in connection with James: "The demands the few greatly creative writers make on our attention, and the rewards they offer, are so remarkable and so continuous that their lesser contemporaries are lucky to be commemorated at all." By using the lesser contemporaries as foils, Mr. Berthoff commemorates them. By assigning places, he adds to their ranks: Howells, for compromising his themes; Herrick, for his condescension and irritation ("peculiar disorders of the dispossessed superior man of modern times"); Norris, for a style which, he says, "is as if Cole Porter had written novels"; Wharton, for punishing her characters. Given a higher place than that usually accorded them are Lafcadio Hearn, "a maker of verbal shapes and forms," in whose writing "we sense his hold upon a wider literary culture and also a more discriminating feeling for style than in almost any other American of his time"; Sarah Jewett, whose *The Country of the Pointed Firs* "marks the crystallization of the broad undifferentiated impulse toward realism in America into the durable forms of an objectively valid art"; Henry Adams, whose *Esther* "Howells, for all his rumination about 'moral complicity,' could not have written . . . in a hundred years"; Stephen Crane, for his "irresistible authority" as a visionary writer; Dreiser, for introducing "a new seriousness and authenticity into American realism"; Robinson, for having "the foremost talent in American poetry between Whitman and Eliot." Those already securely placed re-earn their places under critical scrutiny: Twain, James, Frost. And—it is the most notable and original thing about the book—writers of the literature of argument are judged by the same literary standards and given the prominent place their achievements deserve: Veblen, William James, Henry Adams. (Dewey, "a remarkably careless writer," is not rated highly.)

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One might feel that the concentration on literary essentials rather than historical circumstances results in a lack of thickness. But there is considerable history here, not only in the opening chapter (the least notable) but everywhere, because the close treatment of themes opens into history in the most sensitive way. The discussion of Dreiser's "middle-placed floaters" (Lester Kane in *Jennie Gerhardt*) is an exemplary case in point. Then, the wide education needed by the critic who sets about *placing* secures those relevancies that give depth to the book. The present is a constant dimension. "Churchill," we are told, "could tell his conventional story as efficiently as could, say, James Gould Cozzens a generation later, and with a distinctly pleasanter wit"; history, H.R. Trevor-Roper notwithstanding, should be written in the grand manner. Yeats measures Frost, as the great Europeans measure their American contemporaries. Henry Brewster is introduced to prefigure the present sensibility. Twain is linked with another "artist-performer," Charlie Chaplin; Poe keeps appearing in the discussions of Bierce, Hearn and Crane; and other threads of continuity are suggested — most brilliantly in the case of Emerson and William James, and in the treatment of Robinson's *wordiness*. Mr. Berthoff speaks of his "piecemeal chronicle," but provides all the unity he needs when, in passing, he mentions "that passion for interior truthfulness which since Emerson and Poe has remained the central formal motive in all our practice of the arts."

The only large flaw in the book is the brief final chapter, which seems to me too sweeping and unsupported in its judgments. The period did not come to an end so simply. Expatriation was, of course, sometimes undertaken for the purposes of art education but, more often, as a repudiation of politics. There were "schools" at home: "291," *Others*, *The Dial*. It is not just to say that the "best prospective members [of a national school] abruptly turned away," for some stayed, poets like Crane and Williams, critics like Rosenfeld and Wilson, who even at home learned from the masters. And it is unfair, as also in the case of Babbitt and More, to consider criticism in a way so restricted that its role in creating intellectual situations (from which artists benefit) counts for nothing. Perhaps the volume that follows will modify these judgments—judgments which in no way detract from my belief that Mr. Berthoff is one of the few historians of our literature who have thoroughly and finely possessed it.

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The Knack of Doing Double Duty

THE OLD GLORY. By Robert Lowell. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 194 pp. $4.95.

Alexander Laing

This trilogy of short plays, spotted across two centuries, is a speculation upon the harshness with which representative Americans behave under stress. There is no other unifying resemblance between the protagonists. Governor John Endecott, in the 1630s, asserts the force of the state. Robin, a fictional Deerfield youth, carries in 1775 only the power of his cudgel. Captain Amasa Delano resorts, in 1800, to the armaments of his private ship. Their behavior is symbolically unified by the use of flags at the climaxes and through a deepening ambivalence of motive.

Robert Brustein's preface, adapted from his review of the original production a year ago, claims that *The Old Glory* "heralds the arrival not just of a brilliant new dramatist but of one who may very well come to revolutionize the American theater." It would be a glory indeed if, in the pattern of Marlowe or Molière, a poet could reinvigorate our vacuous stage. Jonathan Miller abets this hope when he refers in a separate note to Robert Lowell's "rich proposals" during rehearsals, "all pointing the way to some unprecedented reward of new drama." But Miller, British director of the New York production, admits that the "grand design" was "seriously damaged" when the first play had to be jettisoned before the opening night. This play, *Endecott and the Red Cross*, presumably is now printed with the benefit of many doctorings in rehearsal to which Miller alludes. It still has structural flaws that pose

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a mournful question: does a poet who may revolutionize our theatre assume that a work which he has not yet made playable is good enough to be read? Is he returning us toward the condition he might amend, an admitted distinction between workable theatre and dramatic verse?

For 2,000 years, poetry was the normal utterance of playwrights. Old verse plays have persisted as the surest staples of the commercial theatre, even while new ones of the last century or two have been relegated more and more often to the condescension of closet audiences. We know that a deft versifier with a good sense of dramaturgy (Maxwell Anderson) can meet the competition of Broadway; a fine poet (Robinson Jeffers) can give new voice to the supplied structure of a play already famous. The question now is whether we can hope to see again the artist who creates as poet and playwright both, who—rather than restate a greatness provided—can by his own invention raise traditional material to a loftier dramatic utterance, in a new shape. Can we have this hope of Lowell? Miller cut his curtain raiser because it has "too many scenes of ritual festivity with long passages of contemplative recitative." To put it candidly, Governor Endecott displays his mind to the audience by addressing a series of stooges. One of them, Elder Palfrey, belatedly objects:

You are talking statecraft. This is over my head.

Exactly. The line itself is the playwright's on-stage apology for having committed much too much contemplative recitative, the dismal sin of plays done for the academic "poet's theatre."

The retention of a free audience, even in the Theatre of the Absurd, requires a continuous perceptible alteration—in the relationship between players, or within a single player who, like Prometheus or Krapp, is pitted alone against circumstance. An admiring director's difficulty with Lowell's first play evidently proceeded from the manner in which it merely shuttles back and forth between two static conditions: soliloquy and choreography.

Endecott and the Red Cross takes its name from one of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales;* its content comes mainly from another, "The Maypole at Merrymount" and from Thomas Morton's chaotic *New English Canaan* of 1637. Morton was the proprietor of a gaily pagan settlement which lasted only as long as you might think in the back yard of New England puritanism. Hawthorne's Governor Endecott closely defines his independence from Archbishop Laud by cutting only the red cross of the state church out of England's flag, then calls for a flourish "in honor of the ensign of New England" as he waves the remainder. Lowell's Endecott cuts down the entire flag, kicks it, and at once orders the murder of his inoffensive Indian captives—a hint, in collapsed time, that full independence will foster a cruel contempt for old legal safeguards.

This first play, derived from three overlapping sources, gave Lowell his freest chance to create his own dramatic structure; yet in this it is notably weak. His dramatic inventiveness operates to far better effect in the second play, *My Kinsman, Major Molineux*, based upon the provided, finely dramatic structure of Hawthorne's single narrative. Hawthorne carefully underplays the drama and enhances the mystery as Robin, aged 18, enters Boston by ferry in the evening, seeking the preferment that an affluent uncle can bestow within a system of privilege. His inquiries are met by truculence and mockery until the reason emerges in a lurid climax. The Bostonians themselves were seeking out Robin's Tory kinsman, who suddenly is drawn around a corner, tarred and feathered. As the mob jeers its anguished victim, in both story and play, Robin emerges from his horror to laugh loudest of all.

Holding closely to details of Hawthorne's main dramatic movement, Lowell admirably displays the dramatist's knack of making them do double duty. There is a hint of Charon in the ferryman who vanishes early out of Hawthorne's tale; Lowell brings him back at the climax to act as Charon in fact. Robin is given, in the play, a younger brother who experiences the bafflements with a difference. The boys' talk, far better managed than Endecott's harangues at his audience-surrogates, replaces much of Hawthorne's narration. There are evocative new symbols such as the proliferating rattlesnake flag. Hawthorne's last inference is strengthened: that the young seeker of privilege will be able, in the new order, to rise by native wit.

On paper, this is emphatically the best drama of the three.

The structure of Lowell's third play is taken more selectively from another single original, Herman Melville's morose novella, *Benito Cereno*, which lately has been sequestered by some of its academic explicators in weird shoals of guff. Its chief oddity, a clutter of redundant legal documentation embedded near the end, can be explained simply enough. A superbly talented writer, in the sharp decline of his fortunes, was hacking for *Putnam's Magazine* when he wrote it, at $5 a page. He wearily padded out his third magazine installment by copying word for word, with necessary minor changes, a large part of the 20 pages of depositions with which Amasa Delano sought to validate the peculiar story he told in Chapter XVIII of his 1817 *Narrative*.

Robert Lowell concludes his play in time to ignore all of this, and uses the action in Melville sparingly. Again a contrapuntal character, John Perkins, is newly invented to develop the protagonist's qualities. Much of the dialogue has no relation to anything in the source. The playwright is beginning to free himself. The manner and the reason deserve attention because the sense of Hawthorne's stories can translate directly into a sympathetic contemporary relevance, whereas Melville's is a pattern of splendors and crudities adding up to a moral disaster. I see no evidence that Lowell, in amending its inferences, went back on this occasion to the primary source for dramatic verities that Melville reversed.

The historic Captain Delano, visiting a disabled Spanish ship at a remote anchorage, was puzzled by her captain's reticence. As Delano pushed off, Don Benito leaped down into the boat to reveal that he had been the intimidated captive of his Negro "body servant," Muri. (In the original account, Melville combined Muri the "body-servant" and Babo the ringleader of the revolt, into a single character, further developed by Lowell.) Captain Delano dispatched his mate with a boarding party to retake the slave ship from the slaves who had risen under Babo. In maritime law, the ship and surviving slaves now belonged, on shares, to the American crew. Delano nevertheless gave her back to Don Benito, who then sought to cheat his benefactors of even the small fee asked for their services and their wounds. An upright Spanish judge frustrated him.

Melville turns the scoundrelly slaver, Don Benito, into a gentle figure of pathos. He makes the heroic slaves into crafty beasts. His kindest image is animalistic: a woman like a doe with her fawn at breast, its hands "two paws." The ship's defenders' "red tongues lolled, wolf-like, from their black mouths. But the pale sailors'

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teeth were set." When this was written the Dred Scott case was creeping to a climax. Lowell gives his Delano some of Melville's less virulent phrases concerning Negroes. The stage business is rich in new invention, but the vigor of Melville's appalling tale is lost. Don Benito's dramatic leap becomes a limp speech:

Don't you understand? He has been holding a knife at my back.

The mate and some seamen were severely wounded, in the primary account, by Negroes who fought with "desperate courage." Lowell gives us a stylized mowing down of Negroes by whites. The prototype of Babo in the prior versions was tried and hanged ashore. Lowell's Delano shoots his Babo six times with an anachronistic revolver.

This third play, while inferior in several respects to the fully successful second one, is more complex and original; the moral point, stressed by Delano and inverted by Melville, dwindles to a wry inference.

A comment, finally, is due upon the praise directed toward Lowell for his Jamesian sense of the past, as well as for the poetry of his lines. Here the frequent anachronisms, which I suppose are intended, present a problem. Few readers will care that Samuel Colt has not yet been born when Delano (who in the real fight killed nobody) slaughters Babo with a six-shooter. More will sense a false note in "a beautiful but dumb English actress . . . looked like a moron." Lowell seems in his mixed idiom to be trying to generalize time. He succeeds rather more in fragmenting it. It seems to me that a sense of the past is achieved not through mannerisms (*Wouldst thou?*) but from a flawless validity of idiom. I find the times of Aristophanes more believable in the rowdy 20th-century idiom of Dudley Fitts's version of *The Birds* than in any of the austere translations: it creates a time wholly consistent within itself. Lowell ranges from passages of lofty symbolic poetry with an antique flavor—odd in a rough seaman's mouth—to bits of our current slang. His seagoing neighbors could have saved him from such howlers as "sealing spears" and hogsheads of water in a whaleboat. Such lapses, singly, matter no more than stout Cortez on the wrong mountain. When there are too many, as there are here, they nick away at the suspension of disbelief.

On the hopeful side, the very variations within the trilogy indicate a restless experimentation which may culminate in a single major work, of poetry and drama both, if the poet can abandon the unsuccessful parts of his experiment as he proceeds.

To Keep the Pot Boiling

LETTERS FROM JACK LONDON. Edited by King Hendricks and Irving Shepard. The Odyssey Press. 502 pp. $10.

Franklin Walker

This year will see the fiftieth anniversary of Jack London's death in Glen Ellen, as well as the ninetieth anniversary of his birth in San Francisco. Of the fifty volumes he produced during his short writing career, which spanned less than two decades, perhaps a dozen are available to the American buyer in hard-cover and paper editions. In the United States, no complete edition of his writings, popular or scholarly, has appeared, although three such editions have come out in Russia; and in England, The Bodley Head is currently bringing out an admirable series of reprints under the editorship of Arthur Calder-Marshall. While London is available to American readers who wish to survey all of his writing only through libraries and a markedly inflated second-hand book market, he continues to be translated and published abroad more extensively than most American and British writers, past or present. *The Index Translationum,* compiled by the United Nations, has consistently indicated the great vogue of London in such widely differing cultures as Rumania, Sweden and Italy.

Though, since his death he has not had as many readers in America as he has deserved, his life has continued to form the basis for myth, to provide the substance with which to create a folk-hero. The admirably developed Jack London State Park at Glen Ellen is one of the most popular excursion spots in California. In Oakland, Jack London Square, created beside the water front from which Jack used to sail his boats, has become the heart of the city's restaurant business, with neither businessman nor tourist caring a whit whether Jack was a juvenile delinquent or a Marxist who signed his letters with a rubber stamp: "Yours for Revolution." Quite correctly they see him as a rebel with stamina, an Alger boy who made good, a spirited adventurer whose life was as exciting as his books. Both to the popular reader and to the scholar (who has long neglected London) *Letters from Jack London* tells more about the man and the writer than anything which has appeared since London's autobiographical novel, *Martin Eden,* and his "alcoholic memoirs," *John Barleycorn.*

King Hendricks of Utah State University, and Irving Shepard, literary executor of the London estate, have selected approximately 400 letters from the more than 2,000 which are extant in libraries and private hands throughout the country as most representative of London's personality and growth. The great bulk of the letters are taken from the extensive London collection at the Huntington Library. With minor reservations, the choice of letters for the volume has been judicious and the result truly representative. Scholars familiar with the London correspondence will recognize that the heart of many of the major items in the collection—the letters to Mabel Apple-

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garth, Cloudesley Johns, Anna Strunsky and George Sterling—were included by Charmian London in her biography, *The Book of Jack London* (1921). However, Hendricks and Shepard have not only supplied the full texts of these letters, and restored Charmian London's censorship of an important letter to Mabel Applegarth ("if I were a woman I would prostitute myself to all men but that I would succeed"); but they have arranged the letters chronologically, have faithfully retained the original spellings and punctuation (except for obvious typographical errors), and have provided a working modicum of informative rather than interpretive footnotes. Even more to the point, they have drawn from the complete file of the Cloudesley Johns letters, recently purchased by the Huntington Library, from the letters to Anna Strunsky which she generously gave to the library before her death, and from the very important correspondence with George P. Brett of The Macmillan Company. Valuable additions are the letters to George Sterling, used only sparingly by Charmian London, in which London is more relaxed and outspoken than in most of his letters (note, for instance, his glee at being able to bring George a gift from the Solomons of "a clitoris, dried with appurtenances attached and strung on a string for an ear ornament"), his exchange of letters with Sinclair Lewis about buying plots from the latter, and his previously unpublished letters to Bessie London, his first wife, and to his daughter Joan (who later was to write the best biography which has appeared about her father). And there are a host of miscellaneous letters reflecting almost every aspect of London's personality.

As a whole the collection supports the editors' claim of creating "a fairly accurate image of London, his intellectual and physical vigor, his impetuousness, his dreams and doubts and frustrations." For orientation, the reader is supplied with brief chronologies in each of the four sections: "Early Years" (when London was learning to write after returning from the Klondike); "Rise to Fame" (which saw the publication of both *The Call of the Wild* and *The Sea-Wolf*, in addition to adventures in England and Korea); "The Years of the Snark" (principally concerned with London's voyage to the South Seas); and "The Years of the Beauty Ranch" (during which London developed his huge ranch in The Valley of the Moon, saw his elaborate "Wolf House" burn down, and deteriorated physically and as a writer). Most valuable of all aids to the reader, at least to the scholar, is the excellent index which lists not only recipients of letters but references to events, writings and persons within the letters. There are some excellent, informal illustrations. Unfortunately the publishers have not done full justice to the material; the type is good but the binding gives symptoms of breaking easily at the spine and the dust jacket would disgrace a box of Crackerjack.

Among the letters, the later ones often present a very discouraging picture of London in his more bellicose and less happy days. The letters to his divorced wife, Bessie Maddern London, in particular, do nothing to endear the writer to posterity; his repeated use of such epithets to her as a "mere jealous sexually-offended, unmotherly, peasant-minded female" is discouraging, to say the least. And in his letters to his daughter, Joan, though it is evident that he craves her respect and love, he is so given to blustering at her that it is a wonder she even considered visiting him at his Beauty Ranch.

The London that comes through as most interesting, and most attractive, is the younger London talking about his youth, about his adventures, about his reading enthusiasms, and about his writing methods. Among his many activities, there is less stress on his socialism than one would expect, although he mentions this interest occasionally and not infrequently writes to some stranger who has inquired about "the Cause." Perhaps the most telling comments on his attitudes as a Socialist appear in a letter to George Sterling, who had asked him, a month after London's *The War of the Classes* appeared, if he would back financially a Socialist paper which Sterling and a friend wished to start. "It's this way, George: I feel that I have done and am doing a pretty fair share of work for the Revolution. I guess my lectures alone before socialist organizations have netted the Cause a few hundred dollars, and my wounded feelings from the personal abuse of the Capitalist papers ought to be rated at several hundred more. There is not a day passes that I am not reading up on socialism and filing socialist clippings and notes. The amount of work that I in a year contribute to the cause of socialism would earn me a whole lot of money if spent in writing fiction for the market."

As for the writings of Karl Marx, he refers as often to those of Robert Browning, whose dramatic force and optimistic philosophy appealed to him very much as a young man, just as Kipling rather than Hardy was the model for his early writings. He even planned to write a novel to be called "The Flight of the Duchess"; though it was to be laid in contemporary California, he confided to Anna Strunsky that it would have "a similar motive to Browning's," presumably referring to the latter's "The Last Duchess."

Although the first letter in the collection was written in 1898 when London was 22, just back from a highly important winter in the Klondike, there is much in the correspondence that reflects both the misery and the adventure of his childhood and early youth. To Mabel Applegarth, who undeservedly became the prototype for Ruth Morse in *Martin Eden*, he complained bitterly that he had gone without food when he was hungry and had worked since he was 10 to help support the family: "Meat, I was that hungry for it I once opened a girl's basket and stole a piece of meat—a little piece the size of my two fingers. . . . In those days, like Esau, I would have literally sold my birthright for a mess of pottage, a piece of meat." In another mood he confided to Cloudesley Johns his joy at getting away from home and going on his own. "When I was just sixteen I broke loose and went off on my own hook. Took unto myself a mistress of the same age, lived a life of wildest risk in which I made more money in one week than I do in a year now, and then, to escape the inevitable downward drift, broke away from everything and went to sea." And to the editor of *The Youth's Companion* he explained in detail just where the *Tales of the Fish Patrol* were true, just where they were fiction.

The references to his early life are but foretastes of the drama and enthusiasm with which he always greeted experience, including reading and writing books, during his 20s. Almost as soon as he started publishing he struck up an acquaintance (through correspondence) with another writer his own age, Cloudesley Johns, and with Johns he discussed in detail his reading interests, his writing efforts and his contacts with those around him. In these letters he rarely becomes tiresome, practically never strident or blustering. Equally revealing are his letters to Anna Strunsky, a student he met at Stanford shortly before he married Bessie Maddern. It is quite possible that he might have married Anna Strunsky if she had not been Jewish. As it was, he wrote letters to

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her which show more idealism and a deeper emotional response than his letters to any other woman; he, in fact, collaborated with her in producing *The Kempton-Wace Letters*, in which Anna treated love poetically, while Jack treated it "scientifically."

His fairly quick financial success always seemed to him something of a miracle and the living standard it made possible was sometimes accepted as an aspect of a game, at other times as a dream which might vanish overnight. To Anna Strunsky he confided: "I dined yesterday, on canvasback and terrapin, with champagne sparkling and all manner of wonderful drinks I had never before tasted warming my heart and brain, and I remembered the sordid orgies and carouses of my youth. We were ill-clad, ill-mannered beasts, and the drink was cheap and poor and nauseating. And then I dreamed dreams, and pulled myself out of the slime to canvasback and terrapin and champagne, and learned that it was solely a difference of degree which art introduced into the fermenting."

Though he made more and more money, he spent it faster than he made it. It was not that he was extravagant or profligate; a surprising amount of his earnings went to helping others. He was almost inordinately generous with the people he liked. Typical is his account to Johns of his running expenses when he was just beginning to sell stories. "Christmas is just past. Further, a friend has taken up writing with seven children and an undeveloped ability, which said friend I have been helping to finance. Another, both ankles broken badly some time since. Then my mother . . . got back in her debts and I have just finished straightening her out. . . . And my Mammie Jennie (Negro foster mother) came down upon me . . . for delinquent taxes. Furthermore, within a week I expect my wife to be confined."

The story of London's success as a writer is told most fully in his correspondence with George P. Brett of The Macmillan Company. Brett saw his possibilities early in London's career, and by sympathetic advice and treatment, kept him with Macmillan for the rest of his life, except for a short period when London, to his quick regret, turned to another publisher. It is unfortunate that Brett's letters to London have not been included in this collection, for they show him dealing with London with kindness, good sense and helpfulness, comparable to those displayed by Maxwell Perkins in working with Wolfe and Fitzgerald. There is space here for only one excerpt from London's many letters to Brett. "Of course my hope, once I get on my feet, is not to write prolifically, but to turn out one book, and a good book, a year. Even as it is, I am not a prolific writer. I write very slowly. The reason I have turned out so much is because I have worked constantly, day in and day out, without taking a rest. Once I am in a position, where I do not have to depend upon each day's work to keep the pot boiling for the next day, where I do not have to dissipate my energies on all kinds of hack, where I can slowly and deliberately ponder and shape the best that is in me, then, at that time, I am confident that I shall do big work."

In Defense of Nationality

THE WESTERN HERO: In History and Legend. By Kent Ladd Steckmesser. University of Oklahoma Press. 281 pp. $5.95.

Robert Alan Aurthur

At this very instant a dozen writers of TV Westerns are sitting in Nate-'n-Al's delicatessen in Beverly Hills who should *never* read *The Western Hero: In History and Legend.* It is difficult enough grinding out those endless episodes without learning from Dr. Steckmesser that your profitable dreams have little basis in fact. Nor is it a book for the tender-minded among us who need the legends, indeed profess to live by them, and are soothed by the thought of a time in our recent history, to which so many would like to return, when men were pure, issues simple, and freedom easily attainable by those willing to take direct action.

For example, Dwight D. Eisenhower, himself somewhat of a legend, is quoted as follows by Dr. Steckmesser from a speech delivered in November, 1953: "I was raised in a little town . . . called Abilene, Kansas. We had as our Marshal a man named Wild Bill Hickok. Now that town had a code and I was raised as a boy to prize that code. It was: Meet anyone face to face with whom you disagree. You could not sneak up on him from behind, or do any damage to him, without suffering the penalty of an enraged citizenry. If you met him face to face and took the same risks as he did, you could get away with almost anything, as long as the bullet was in front."

It is surely a coincidence and not a deliberate thrust at our former President that James Butler ("Wild Bill") Hickok is one of the four Western archetypes chosen by Dr. Steckmesser to be studied in depth. Nowhere can the differences between fact and legend be more clearly drawn than in the case of "Wild Bill."

According to Dr. Steckmesser, the truth about Hickok as Marshal of Abilene was that he was a well-known boozer, womanizer, and suspected grafter who operated mainly as a gambler from the Alamo saloon. He *did* shoot a lot of people, some of them known bad men and some innocents, but these acts of violence were usually against other drunks and gamblers whom Hickok shot first and investigated afterward. There is not a single recorded instance of "Wild Bill" (or any other Western "hero," for that matter) ever dueling another gunman in empty, dusty streets as a result of

Robert Alan Aurthur's name has been attached as writer, editor or producer to many of the best TV shows of the last decade. He is currently adapting The Sailor Who Fell From Grace With the Sea *for the screen.*

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challenge. In fact, it's possible that the only time Hickok *was* challenged, by the notorious Texas desperado, John Wesley Hardin, "Wild Bill" talked his way out over a bottle of champagne.

The author marks the beginning of the Hickok legend at Rock Creek, Neb., in 1858, when at age 21, James Butler (not yet "Wild Bill") was employed by a freighting firm as a teamster and station attendant. A man named McCanles, owed money by the freight company, came one day with two companions (all unarmed) and his 12-year-old son to press the station agent, Horace Wellman, for payment. Dr. Steckmesser, in his extraordinarily well annotated and impressively documented book, describes the scene that followed:

As McCanles stood outside the station demanding Wellman's appearance, Hickok fired from behind a curtain in the station and killed him with a single rifle bullet in the heart. When Woods and Gordon [McCanles's friends] *ran up to the cabin, Hickok again fired and wounded both of them. Woods fell near the station, where Wellman came out and crushed his skull with a hoe. Gordon ran along the Creek until "Doc" Brink, the station stocktender, caught up with him and ended his misery with a shotgun blast. Young Monroe McCanles raced back to the McCanles ranch three miles away and sobbed out his story.*

So much for ". . . (meeting) him face to face and (taking) the same risks. . . ." As for an "enraged citizenry," Hickok, Wellman and Brink were acquitted on pleas of self-defense in a trial overseen by a justice of the peace who later as county treasurer was arrested for embezzlement. Young Monroe was not allowed to testify.

The distortion of the McCanles affair was begun immediately by Hickok himself who attempted a partial justification by falsely claiming McCanles to be a Confederate conspirator. After the Civil War the incident, Dr. Steckmesser tells us, ". . . was later resurrected by Hickok biographers to become one of the most celebrated exploits in Western legend." Subsequent accounts identified McCanles as the leader of a gang of ten fully-armed desperadoes whom "Wild Bill" dispatched single-handed.

Hickok might never have become the prototype of Western virtue and heroism if he had not been selected by a writer for *Harper's* magazine, George Ward Nichols, as the subject of an article that would, according to Dr. Steckmesser, ". . . create a character who would fascinate Eastern readers . . . [as well as] create a type-figure of the frontiersman." In attaining his ends Nichols shamelessly distorted facts, made up stories with little or no basis, and thus created a myth that, while fulfilling all the needs of 19th-century romantic literature, bears little resemblance to the real Hickok. Interestingly enough, Nichols himself accompanied his article with this note: "My object here has been to make a slight record of one who is one of the best—perhaps the very best—example of a class who more than any other encountered perils and privations in defense of our nationality."

Unable to find such a real-life paragon, Nichols made him up. Other writers, among them Henry M. Stanley and George Armstrong Custer, later took up the legend and thrust it beyond any reality, a process furthered by dozens of dime novels and biographies—right up to our own time of motion pictures and television. Writing about Hickok was a side line for General Custer who perpetuated his own legend by writing mainly of himself, a self-serving pastime not limited to generals of that era.

One is tempted to deal with Dr. Steckmesser's book in the simple terms of an "exposé," but that would be doing the work a grave disservice. The Western legend is too secure and too deeply ingrained in our national cultural dream to be shaken by any one book, in any case. What Dr. Steckmesser, a historian now teaching at Los Angeles State College, has done is taken Hickok, "The Gunfighter

THREE PRESIDENTS

Andrew Jackson

I want to be a white horse!
I want to be a white horse on the green mountains!
A horse that runs over wooden bridges, and sleeps
In abandoned barns . . .

Theodore Roosevelt

When I was President I ate crackers with Calvin Coolidge.
I crushed snails with my bare teeth.
I slept in my underwear in the White House.
I ate the Cubans with a straw, and Lenin dreamt of me every night.
I wore down a forest of willow trees.
I ground the snow, and sold it.
The mountains of Texas shall heal our cornfields,
Overrun by the yellow race.
As for me, I want to be a stone. Yes!
I want to be a stone laid down thousands of years ago,
A stone with invisible cracks! Holding up the edge of the house!
I want to be a stone that gets up and runs around at night,
And lets the bedroom fall, that leaps into the water
Carrying the thief down with him.

John F. Kennedy

I want to be a stream of water falling.
I want to be water falling from high in the mountains,
Water that dissolves everything,
That is never drunk, falling from ledge to ledge, glass to glass.
I want the air around me to be invisible, resilient,
Able to flow past rocks.
I will carry the boulders with me to the valley.
Then ascending I will fall through space again:
Glittering in the sun, like the crystal in sideboards,
Goblets of the old life, before it was ruined by the Church.
And when I ascend the third time, I will fall forever,
Missing the earth entirely.

Robert Bly

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and Civilizer"; Kit Carson, "The Mountainman"; Billy the Kid, "The Outlaw"; and George Armstrong Custer, "The Great Soldier-Martyr" and juxtaposed facts against legend. He has, it seems to me, chosen brilliantly. In each case the subject did operate in an area where heroism was in fact necessary for survival; in each case the subject satisfied a *need* for legend on the part of lesser folk, mostly Easterners, who looked longingly to the frontier for fun and profit, yet feared its dangers; and in each case the subject did lead a violent and colorful life.

One may lament the fact that we need these legends, but, then, what's good enough for Dwight Eisenhower should be acceptable for the rest of us, I suppose. On the other hand, as a one-time weaver of Western legend myself — in the film *Warlock* from Oakley Hall's novel of the same title — I much prefer Dr. Steckmesser's ego-driven, publicity-minded, three-dimensional George Custer to Hollywood's paper-thin Errol Flynn. And the real Billy the Kid, a punk, Frank Nitti-like enforcer serving one side of an economic range war à la the later Capones and O'Banions, is far more interesting than the saintly Robin Hood he has become, pure and blameless — and bloodless.

Yet legend and myth will always be with us. We have just seen, and are seeing John F. Kennedy become a legend before our very eyes; and who dares tell your local Birchers that their hero was a colorless little man distinguished only by the fact that he allowed himself, as legend has it, to be done in by Chinese Reds?

In *Magic, Science and Religion* Malinowski writes:

> *Myth fulfills in primitive culture an indispensable function: it expresses, enhances, and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains practical rules for the guidance of man. Myth is thus a vital ingredient of human civilization; it is not an idle tale, but a hard-worked active force; it is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom.*

Dr. Steckmesser obviously takes his legends where he finds them and deals with them in a splendid, tough-minded way. His book should be placed in front of every television set as an antidote. It will do the job.

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Films from the Vietcong

Peter Gessner

Some half-dozen films produced by the National Liberation Front of Vietnam are making their way around the country, shown for the most part in poor screening conditions to limited audiences. According to recent reports in the New York press, at least one film has been shown to local high school audiences, drawing indignant protests from suburban parents. Despite the difficulties imposed by a sound track loaded with hyperbole and slogans (the English narrations have all the literary grace of a pamphlet), and despite the deteriorated physical condition of the films which makes many of these screenings little more than mysterious lantern shows, the very existence of these films merits attention.

As a record of the face of the war in Vietnam, and even more as an indication of what the film makers want "us" to know about them, the NLF films are a humbling experience to the viewer. In one (dated 1965), there is a brief sequence in a Vietcong-held village where, during a lull in the fighting, a Western-style ballet is performed within a ring of watching guerrillas. Even the hardened view which says that such things don't happen spontaneously, that they are arranged for the visiting camera, must cope with the fact that these people, the Vietcong, engaged in a brutalizing struggle, have thought it important to include dance in the midst of footage of a vicious guerrilla war.

If this instance indicates that the Vietcong's vision of itself in some sense includes an awareness of the human implications of the kind of war it is forced to fight, its interpretation of events in the United States appears to be filtered through the prism of ideology. For example, one is saddened by repeated references throughout these films to the "progressive American peoples" linked to shots of domestic anti-war demonstrations. Rather than realistically assessing the size and shape of current anti-war sentiment in this country, the film makers seem to have chosen to plug in the appropriate ideological platitude. It may be that, as James Cameron put it in his recent series of articles in *The New York Times*, "too many officials speak an English or French that was actually learned in slogans"; one also suspects that the twenty-year heritage of civil war brings with it a certain hardening of thought, an impatience with the niceties of language and distinction-making.

Once the narration is peeled away, and the images themselves are allowed to live for what they are, the texture of life in Vietnam forces its way through. Another film contains an extended sequence about captured equipment which begins as an apparent ode to self-sufficiency, only to move in a quite unexpected direction. From neatly stacked piles of guns and machinery, the camera turns to people making candleholders from what seem to be spent shells, to still others cutting jeep tires into sandal patterns. For a moment, the gulf between these people and a civilization which, even in peacetime, has managed to institutionalize the notion that *things* wear out, seems to loom larger than any logistical speculations about how the Vietcong supply themselves.

Of the six or so films now making the rounds, only one seems to go beyond the momentary revelatory glimpse to create a more whole impact. It was produced, probably by the NLF or a militant wing of the Buddhists, sometime after 1963 (there is no more precise internal evidence), and deals with the wave of demonstrations which followed the Diem government's suppression of the Buddhists.

It begins with what is a prologue of almost abstract battle footage: a montage of swooping planes, machine-gun rattles and barbed wire, not unlike Lewis Milestone's *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Abruptly, we are swept into a slow processional of Buddhist priests going out into the streets of Saigon to demonstrate for what, to Americans, would seem to be the most basic of liberties—the freedom to worship. Great bales of barbed wire are unrolled in front of them by soldiers; the younger priests, whose faces strangely recall those of the early civil rights workers in the American South, quietly place their hands around the wire as the soldiers begin to try to cordon them off. A tear-gas grenade lunges across the street, streaming white smoke like some kind of mythic Oriental paper beast.

The Diem soldiers, in camouflaged battle dress and holding shields which resemble the tops of garbage cans and which they seem to use to ward off objects thrown at them by the crowd, begin to move against the priests; at this point, the film takes on the qualities of an ominous pageant play. Oddly incongruous Western symphonic music replaces the English narrator (who, with good sense, has kept quiet throughout most of the demonstration sequence), and an unpredictable concordance of sound and image occurs: stock movie music joined with startling images raises the film to an entirely new level, toward a totality of emotion quite difficult to describe precisely. It is one of those rare moments in motion pictures when one plus one equals three. (Something of the sort happens in Luis Buñuel's *Land Without Bread*, a 1932 documentary of an impoverished region in Spain, in which Brahms's *Fourth Symphony* is used throughout the film *not* as a handy contrast but rather in an almost architectural way to provide a vaulting, an unattainable ceiling of emotion which hovers over the sordid level of human action.) Generally, the NLF film makers do not employ music in such ways; the music in other films is of an indeterminate martial nature, used conventionally to fill in behind the narrator.

The Buddhist film, in many ways the most successful of the NLF group, seems to have received less circulation than what is perhaps the most widely seen but unfortunately the least interesting of the lot. This picture, dated 1965 and bearing the title "Foreign Correspondents Visit the National Liberation Front" (at any rate, something like that), records *Humanité* correspondents Wilfred Burchette and Madeleine Riffaud eating and singing with happy peasants. The film is almost completely uninformative and comes close to being embarrassing — Mlle. Riffaud is more than effusive in her desire to kiss and fondle young Vietcong guerrillas. The quality of the print is mercifully poor and a good portion of all this is practically invisible.

In addition to these films of the war in the South, there is one from the North which depicts recent preparations for air defense. It has an untranslated Vietnamese narration, and does not appear to have been widely seen in this country. The film seems to have been made in 1965, after the start of bombings in the North. Perhaps half the footage deals with preparatory and actual antiaircraft drills, ranging from heavy guns to small arms. An extended and well-put-together sequence begins with telephoto

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Peter Gessner is a free-lance film editor and camera assistant; he was a member of the crew that made Nothing But a Man.

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shots of what appear to be United States swept-wing jets returning again and again over an indeterminate target. Small-arms fire is put up from the ground with what seems to be pathetic intensity, but Chris Koch, formerly of WBAI-FM radio, witnessed such drills by students during his recent trip to North Vietnam and, upon returning home, called the Department of Defense to inquire whether small-arms fire could bring down an airplane. He was reportedly told: "Hell yes! During World War II we used to do that all the time." Evidently, massed gunfire forms a kind of super-shotgun spread which can imperil fuel supply tanks, rockets, or other vulnerable parts.

What comes through from this film, and indeed from all the NLF films, despite their monothematic crudeness and technical imperfection, is something of the brute level at which the Vietnamese people, North and South, seem prepared to resist an increasingly destructive and degrading war. The master image might be one of a wounded, angry fox facing the striking force of a mailed fist.

Although the NLF movies draw unexpectedly large audiences (mostly students) wherever they are shown, their net effect is ambiguous at best. They seldom exploit the motion picture as a particular form of communication, nor do they explore the special qualities that set it off from pamphlets or slide shows. The films do not achieve a sense of the camera's own participation in events, a sense present in the footage of volunteer cameramen for the Spanish Republic (*To Die in Madrid*). Judged by the standards we apply to works of art, or even against the more vague measure of some kind of immediacy of feeling, the work is crude and conventional. One responds with something of the suspicion Trotsky felt, perhaps unjustly, for the work of the poet Mayakovsky: "[he] shouts too often where one should speak; and so his cry, where cry is needed, sounds inadequate."

Reports from some of the Vietnam teach-ins have indicated that one of the principal difficulties in raising discussion with students is that cold-war structures of thought have so conditioned people that they do not think of Vietnam in terms of the aspirations, indifferences, antipathies of its people, but rather as a "plot"—vast numbers being manipulated. This writer and a small group of independent film makers—a loosely federated cooperative with no political or aesthetic manifestoes to proclaim—have undertaken to produce a film whose subject will be the very nature of this dilemma (the project has received the support of various organizations, including the Artists and Writers Committee to End the War, and Students for a Democratic Society).

The film is to be directed at those who have remained indifferent to the war or actually support the Administration's policies in Vietnam. It is not to be a work of "propaganda," which seems useless now, but a film which sets out an encounter with all that we know about the war and the American response to it. Selections from the NLF films discussed above will be combined with domestic newsreel sources and extensive shooting in this country. The film will juxtapose footage from Vietnam with official policy statements; it will seek interviews with those in power, with returning soldiers, and perhaps with former French colonials; it will attempt to find and elucidate the visual correlatives in this country which underlie and support the American response to the war. It will attempt to do all this without making ex cathedra statements of its own; rather, it will seek to embody a complex of thought and feeling in the language of film. The film project has received support and offers of advisory assistance from several independent film makers, including Hilary Harris and Leo Hurwitz. In addition, an offer of an original music score has been made by Morton Feldman and other contemporary composers.

MUSIC

Benjamin Boretz

The current New York concert season has been remarkable chiefly for the number of events that have sharply revealed the deep separation in our musical "two cultures," between the public musical life and the state of the musical culture it supposedly represents. At first glance, the observation seems paradoxical: this has been the season in which the activity of music's "inner" world, represented mainly by the many contemporary-music performance groups, has become an established "presence" on the New York scene, partly through its steady increase, but even more because of the secure base it has found within the university community. At the same time, too, the "big" musical world has made some conspicuous gestures toward 20th-century music, most notably those connected with Leonard Bernstein's return to the Philharmonic after a year's absence. But it was, precisely, the contrast with the reality and stability of a seriously functioning new-music world that most clearly exposed the emptiness and naïveté underlying these gestures.

It was possible, for example, for William Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Symphony to play in Carnegie Hall the first all-Schoenberg orchestral program ever given in New York (regarding which *The New York Times*, whose music section perhaps represents still a third musical culture, ran the extraordinary headline, "Steinberg Leads Modern Works"). But this kind of event seems almost a cliché to anyone in the least acquainted with the other domain, or even with conventional European orchestra and opera-house activity, and it comes long after both the publication and recording of complete Schoenberg editions have been begun. Furthermore, the quality of execution, which was in fact on

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the level usually associated with first performances of new works, could hardly have seemed tolerable to anyone familiar with the incomparably superior standard available no farther away than the little Recital Hall next door, or the nearest Columbia recording.

A considerably more spectacular, or at least maudlin, gesture has been Leonard Bernstein's publicly expressed anxiety over the state of the symphony in the 20th century, and the pessimistic conclusions about the present and future of orchestral composition (though not orchestral performance) to be inferred from it. The basis for his reflections is being presented in a comprehensive survey, over a few Philharmonic seasons, entitled "Symphonic Forms in the Twentieth Century." Out of this will presumably come the judgment that the orchestra, far from being annihilated by the poverty of 20th-century symphonic writing, is relieved of its unbecoming and painful responsibility to represent the musical present, and now enters a glorious twilight as a museum of comfortable sounds.

It is an obvious absurdity, of course, to equate the condition of 20th-century orchestral composition with that of "the symphony." For not only has the idea of the symphony lost any real force as a formal distinction in modern orchestral music but it appears only rarely as a designate in the orchestral works of the major 20th-century composers. Those who have cultivated it have been, for the most part, relatively minor figures with little influence on the development of a contemporary orchestral approach. But having set up such an equation, Mr. Bernstein in his programs appears to exclude such infrequent works as do in fact represent serious thought about the contemporary possibilities of symphonic form. Stravinsky is unmentioned in the Philharmonic program book's note on the series, and such primary figures as Schoenberg, Hindemith, Sessions and Carter are mentioned only as future possibilities.

What does emerge in Mr. Bernstein's series is rather more Mahler than he usually performs on three consecutive weeks, and a festival of such antediluvian cream puffs as the complete works of Sibelius, and docile monsters by Vaughan Williams, Nielsen, Prokofiev and Shostakovich, along with a few prewar and recent American works.

The programs I have heard so far included the tiny chamber-music Webern symphony next to the Mahler Seventh, and Ives's least interesting but easiest symphony, his Third, along with the demanding Mahler Ninth, which was in fact played with impressive restraint and control. But the naive attempt to smooth Webern's carefully isolated pitch events into Schubertian phrases, and the painful technical problems encountered, especially by the Philharmonic's horn player, were in vivid contrast to the standards of interpretation and execution that have become routine for the performance of this work in the chamber-music domain.

Yet one remembers when, with no publicity at all, the Philharmonic was actually the principal source for first hearings of advanced music—*Wozzeck* had its first American performance here under Mitropolous, who also performed all the major orchestral works of Schoenberg long before they were available on records. And when one recalls that the Philharmonic's own Chamber Ensemble, which in many ways anticipated the recent new-music groups, was still functioning in the early fifties, it appears that the present total discontinuity in the musical world is actually a product of the last ten years, a bizarre corollary both of the phenomenal popular success of concert music in America and the vitality of our compositional activity.

In the new-music area itself this season, interest has focused on the work of the new Rockefeller-supported group in residence at Rutgers, under the direction of Arthur Weisberg. Predictably, given the known superiority of most of the players, and Weisberg's customary conductorial approach, the performances have generally been reliable; but the problem of establishing an individuality in an already crowded field can be seen in the ambiguity of the group's programming. Thus, even the titles of its two New York series display uncertainty; the Hunter College concerts are being presented as "The Twentieth Century: The First Sixty-Five Years," which surely represents the ultimate in noncommitment, while the idea of calling the Carnegie Recital Hall programs "From Hindemith to Stockhausen" (which, strictly applied, would exclude Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Bartok, et al., as well as anyone under 38) seems particularly obtuse for an American ensemble.

But obtuseness, apparently, has been the order of the season: it was last fall that the death of Varèse was considered newsworthy enough only for the deepest inside pages of our newspapers, while the Ford Foundation's orchestral program (see *The Nation*, November 15, 1965) was proclaimed widely as the salvation of American musical culture. And in December, the New York Critics' Circle finally disbanded on the grounds that the major critics could not spare time from "important" concert activity to hear any new works, and that new music was in any case being played in such quantity as to make further encouragement by the Critics' Circle Awards unnecessary. In short, this season has been a time when one wondered whether a serious musician could any longer pretend to recognize in the public world of music some significant aspect of his own concerns.

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